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Se. Heiligkeit Pius X.

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ARMS OF LEO XIII

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INTRODUCTORY

The teachings of the Catholic Faith, which have produced Saints, Martyrs, and Confessors of the Truth in every age, are herein set forth in a most lucid and instructive manner, in the Comprehensive Expositions of that eloquent and learned French ecclesiastic, Monseigneur De Ségur, whose name is the synonym of piety and learning, and whose celebrated treatise on "Holy Communion," because of its excellence, was personally distributed by **the hand of Pope Pius IX. to the priests of Rome.** Every Catholic who is truly devoted to the faith of his fathers will find in this volume the means either of enlightening or confounding its opponents, as the case may require. The authorities whom the author has followed in explaining Catholic Truth are, generally speaking, the Fathers of the Church and her recognized theologians. He embraces no particular system, but simply follows the teaching and tradition of Mother Church.

The sublime fruits of the Faith in the lives of those who have suffered the tortures of imprisonment and even martyrdom for the truth, or who have braved the terrors of the sea or the dangers of the wilderness for the sake of carrying the Cross to the savage races of unknown lands, are seen in these pages to have been produced in every age and clime. The triumph of Catholic Truth, from the days of its early beginnings, among a despised people in an obscure Roman province, until it has circled the globe with churches, and filled the air of every land with incense of devotion and hymns of praise, has been indeed wonderful.

Besides giving a clear insight into **the whole body of Catholic** teaching, presenting its beauty, simplicity, and reasonableness, this work also contains glorious examples of the elevating effect that these teachings have had upon great and devout minds in every condition of life—the general and the private, the scholar and the peasant, the penitent prisoner and the man above reproach, the wealthy and the poor, all classes alike have presented inspiring lessons of **its incarnation in human life and conduct.**

The chapters entitled "Lessons from the Pioneer of the Faith in the New World," and "Lessons from the Church in America," stand almost in the relation of antecedent and consequent; while the immortal writings of Thomas à Kempis, presented in the section entitled "Glorious Light of Christ Crucified," are the embodiments of the sublimest precepts taught by the Catholic Church. Her Truth, Infallible, as set forth herein, has in every age produced saints and heroes who have made her history glorious and her Faith triumphant. For, as we have read in the inspired words of St. John: "This is the victory which overcometh the world, OUR FAITH." (1 St. John, v. 4.)

No other form of religion, and none of the sects of Christianity, has ever produced such a host of spiritual disciples, or so devoted and saintly a priesthood. For the Catholic Church, which is Christianity in its unity and totality, and is the synthesis of all the scattered truths of every form of religion that has ever existed, in its perfect, organic, living form, possesses within herself all the Divine agencies for the spiritual perfection of man. Hence her adaptability to all ages and peoples, and the satisfying effects of her doctrines on the minds of the wisest and the most ignorant, and her power in creating saints and sanctifying souls, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit—the object of Christ's mission and the essential principle of true supernatural life.

Concerning the chapters comprising Volume I. of this work, from the pen of that great Champion of the Faith, Monseigneur De Ségur, adapted from the French for the benefit of our readers, the pious and learned author uses these very appropriate words:

"These Instructions, almost two hundred in number, form, if I mistake not, a complete course of Christian doctrine, and a collection of very simple, elementary lectures, well adapted to the religious need of our time. I offer them to Christian families, in which the good custom prevails of always joining in religious reading after evening prayers; to all those charged with the instruction of children and who desire to teach something beyond reading and writing; to catechists and priests who are anxious for solid reading of a short and practical kind, and which would be useful to them at religious meetings. Let none be offended by the simplicity of method and style; I believe this quite necessary in an age when the folly of newspapers, novels, and a thousand unhealthy publications, causes the very elements of faith and good sense to be often utterly forgotten."

In the same spirit this entire work is presented to the reader.

J. C. C.

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His Holiness Pope Pius X.

Guiseppe Sarto

as

Priest, Prelate, Patriarch and Pontiff.

That Catholics have excellent reason to believe that the Holy Ghost directs the conclave is evidenced by the election of Cardinal Sarto, Patriarch of Venice, as the successor of Pope Leo XIII. On all sides the action of the conclave was heartily approved. Catholics hailed the new Pope as eminently fitting to follow the great Leo; non-Catholics greeted him as a scholarly, charitable, and devoutly religious man; and it is said that even the Italian government welcomed his election. Under such circumstances it is apparent a better choice could not have been made.

Although many other Cardinals who had been mentioned as Papal possibilities were better known to the world, it does not follow that they possessed what might be called Pope-like qualities in a higher degree than the former Patriarch of Venice. Anyone who reads the story of his life must admit that Pius X is possessed of extraordinary ability. Under his administration the Church prospered wonderfully in Venice. Thus he must have been a fine administrator. That is a quality which the occupant of the Papal throne can use to good purpose. When we add that he is an eminent scholar, a remarkable preacher and a man noted for his piety and good works, it is apparent that in Pius X we have an ideal Pope. Like many of his predecessors the present Pontiff has sprung from the people. He has risen in the Church from the post of parish priest to the Chair of Peter. Thus he is a self-made man, a fact that should make him especially popular in this country.

Guiseppe Sarto was born at Riese, Treviso, Italy, June 2, 1835. He was educated in the Salesian Institute at Cottolengo, which was founded by the famous Dom Bosco, and at Padua. He was a studious youth, and his rector once said of him: "Sarto has

never been a child." After his ordination on September 18, 1858, at Castelfranco, the birthplace of the great master Giorgione, he began the work of a parish priest, as coadjutor to the parish priest of Tombolo, Province of Padua, a small village of 2,950 people, who were the first to appreciate his virtues. His kindness was untiring. He sought to fill their wants, and never a murmur was heard when he was called in the middle of a winter night to a deathbed which proved to be nothing of the kind. He gave freely of his very small means, until he often went without meals himself, but he kept many a poor family from starvation.

In 1867, he was at last appointed parish priest at Salzano, which was considered an important promotion, being a village of 3,341 souls. Still he was exceedingly sorry to leave Tombolo, having become attached to the people. The peasants, when he left, made a most enthusiastic demonstration, while many women wept copiously. He was distinguished so much at Salzano that he was only kept there two years, which is remarkable, in the career of an Italian parish priest. In 1875, he was elected chancellor of the bishopric of Treviso, then spiritual director of that seminary, prosynodal examiner, judge of the ecclesiastical tribunal, and finally vicar-general.

Pope Leo, who had highly appreciated his ability, piety and modesty, appointed him, in November, 1884, at the age of forty-nine years, bishop of Mantua, where he remained nine years, until 1893, when he was made a Cardinal and appointed Patriarch of Venice. In the queen of the Adriatic he distinguished himself by his zeal and labor, and in promoting the earnestness of religion. To him is due the revival of the Gregorian chant in the beautiful churches overlooking the lagoons, and to him is due the strict return to liturgic rules.

During the nine years of his reign at Mantua, Bishop Sarto led a life as abstemious as that of his poorest parish priest. It was often said of him that the poorest man or most unfortunate woman could approach him for advice or aid. Denying himself all social entertainment, he devoted many hours each day to scholarly application.

The predecessor of Pius X, by his transcendant genius, placed the Holy See in a stronger position than it occupied when he assumed the Chair of Peter. Many of the difficult problems Leo XIII had to confront on his accession have been successfully solved. There are still others to be settled by Pius X in the coming years.

What is known of the present occupant of the Chair of Peter encourages the hope that he will be able to cope successfully with the difficulties he will have to face. He has proved himself a man of superior abilities in the exalted offices he has already held. Marion Crawford, the well-known American author, writes of him in the highest terms. Mr. Crawford, who is a Catholic and spent his boyhood and early manhood in Rome, has a wide acquaintance with the Italians holding high positions in Church and State. He wrote as follows of Pius X, previous to his election to the Pontificate :

" Cardinal Sarto was much talked of in Italy when, on his preferment to the Patriarchate, he encountered a determined opposition on the part of the Italian Government before he could take possession of his See. The Government maintained that the Patriarchate was part of the King of Italy's patronage, and that it was the King's right to present his own candidate. The difficulty that ensued was in reality solved, or shelved, because Cardinal Sarto, though chosen by the Pope, was a favorite with the Italian Government and with King Humbert himself—a rather singular case in Italy. The Cardinal has, therefore, ruled his diocese undisturbed during the last ten years, beloved by Catholics, esteemed by the Government, and respected by his enemies. Under his sway, the Catholic institutions in Venice have thriven exceedingly, and the Cardinal's piety, combined with his very noteworthy common sense, has given him the reputation of being an ideal Bishop."

It was on June 12, 1893, that the Pope in Consistory created him Cardinal and Patriarch of Venice. It was shown by learned theologians, in connection with the controversy with the Italian Government, that thePatriarchate of Venice was only a continuation of the ancient Patriarchate of Aquillia, now dispersed, and

that the right of appointment accorded by the Popes from the time of San Lorenzo and Justinian was only a privilege granted to the republic, and was not transferable to others. The Italian Government, after long refusing to grant an exequatur to the Patriarch, finally acquiesced in the demands of the Vatican.

As Patriarch of Venice Cardinal Sarto became the idol of the Venetians. When his gondola passed along the canals the people rushed to the bridges and along the sides of the canals, kneeling and saluting, the women exclaiming: "God bless the Patriarch!" In those days the Patriarch would say that he did not like to go out of sight of the lions of St. Mark's, which now he will never see again, if, as is almost sure, he follows the rule inaugurated by his two predecessors—never to leave the Vatican.

Pius X has very modest tastes, having retained almost the same habits as when he was a mere curate at Salzano. He is strict, but was just with his clergy. There is nothing he dislikes so much as publicity. He detests the praise and compliments of courtiers. Frankness is another of his principal qualities, although he is somewhat timid. Although at first coldly received by the liberal Venetians, his affable manners soon made him many friends, and a most welcome visitor in the homes of the patricians. His favorite diversion was that of taking excursions in his gondola along the shore and landing at some point on the coast to pay surprise visits to the priests of his jurisdiction. At six o'clock every morning the Patriarch was in the habit of going out for a long walk, usually to the sandy islands of Lido, which separate the lagoons of Venice from the Adriatic Sea, as he loved exercise and the country. He often went to his native village of Riese, where he visited his many poor relatives.

The relations of Cardinal Sarto with the House of Savoy are well illustrated by what occurred two months previous to his election to the Pontificate, when the King of Italy went to Venice to open the International Art Exhibition. King Victor Emmanuel gave orders that the Patriarch have precedence over all the local authorities, but the latter having arrived while the King was speaking to the Prefect, who is the highest government official in the province, refused to be announced and said that he

would not disturb his Majesty. He remained in an ante-chamber conversing with the generals and admirals gathered there. When the King learned of his presence he came to receive him on the threshold of the chamber, and kept him in conversation accompanying him afterward in a gondola, while all the soldiers rendered military honors to the ecclesiastic.

It was recently said of him that none knew his attitude on political questions, but that the people of Venice knew that if there was sickness or suffering in the city he was sure to be found ministering to the afflicted with his own hands. They also know that he is a man of great learning, a preacher of great sermons, a writer of good books. They also know that when Cardinal Sarto undertook a work—the building of a church or the righting of a wrong—he never stopped until his efforts were crowned with success. Those who know these things look forward to a pontificate that will not only continue the excellent work of Leo XIII, but will achieve an especial success from the individual ability of the Pope.

Pope Pius X is a patron of the arts, and his private gallery of paintings in the Seminaire Patriarcale is of more than ordinary value. Under his direction the music of St. Mark's has become famous, and his earnest patronage of the musician Perosi leaves little doubt that he will have care for the development of the music of the Church.

Personally the Pope is a man of medium height and of good physique, and gives the impression of great activity and power, while the quiet dignity of his bearing is at once attractive and impressive. Beyond all else, he is personally most unassuming, and is reputed to have gained more than one friendship through this very attribute. The story told of him by a correspondent, on his arrival in Rome for the conclave, whether based upon fact or the production of a fertile imagination, is a good enough illustration of the man to be worthy of repetition. The Patriarch was said to be receiving the good wishes of his friends bearing, of course, upon the one subject that was uppermost in the minds of all, and to a definite expression of hope that the choice might fall to him, he is said to have replied:

"Oh, no; I purchased a return ticket for Venice."

The coat-of-arms of the new Pope bears on its shield an anchor resting upon the waters, while above is a single star, burning with all brightness.

There has been much discussion in the public press as to what will be the policy of Pope Pius X. We Catholics know that he will be actuated solely by the desire to promote the welfare of God's Church on earth. Pius X has entered upon his Pontificate with the knowledge that he is the instrument of God and the wish to carry out the will of his Master here below. He knows that one day he must give an account of his stewardship, and that the higher his position in the Church, the more will be expected of him. It is because of this awful responsibility placed upon them that our priests, prelates, and Pontiffs are such serious minded and conscientious men. And so Pope Pius X, it is certain, will take more than a worldly view of questions affecting the condition of the Church.

It has been intimated that he will make peace with the Italian government because he is believed to be on friendly terms with the House of Savoy. If the Church recognizes the Italian government in Rome she places herself in the position of an Italian subject. As the Church is Universal she must be free and independent, and it is safe to predict that Pope Pius X will never sacrifice any of his rights as head of the Church. Intimate friends, it is declared, describe Pius X as absolutely uncompromising on the Roman question, notwithstanding his personally good relations with the royal family. Thus it is clear that what compromising there is to be to settle the Roman question must be by the Italian Government.

His Grace Archbishop Farley, of New York, met Pope Pius X, when he was Patriarch of Venice. While traveling through Italy in 1902, the Archbishop stopped at Venice and visited the Patriarch. The Archbishop was at once struck with the piety and humility of Cardinal Sarto, who received him with evident pleasure. On the same day the Archbishop, then Bishop Farley, sent the following letter to the St. Vincent de Paul Society of New York:

"I called to-day, Nov. 1, to pay my respects to His Eminence, the Cardinal Patriarch of Venice, who received me with the greatest kindness. In the course of our conversation I asked how the poor of Venice were cared for and if any of the conferences of the St. Vincent de Paul Society were established there. His Eminence brightened. 'Yes there is,' and what, perhaps, will startle some, he tells me that recently he founded a conference of St. Vincent de Paul of ladies in every parish.

"Their work is the same as that of the conferences of men, only they look after women and girls especially. They have the same rules; they have the same indulgences and the funds are divided equally between the two conferences. The highest ladies of Venice belong to these female confraternities. Among the poor in their dwellings these gentlewomen, in their gondolas, may be seen making calls on the lowly and unfortunate with as much regularity and more regard than if calling on their noble friends. The sources of revenue of the conferences are the savings banks, for which donations are made every New Year's Day, and the gifts of wealthy citizens, as well as the members of conferences. This is the work of Cardinal Sarto.

"The society gives nothing to the poor but bread served by tickets, which are taken by every baker in Venice, being considered as good as gold. The quantity varies according to the condition, sickness, old age and infirmity counting for more than mere poverty. But one condition is insisted upon. Where there are children the children must be sent to the catechism class.

"I was no less pleased than surprised to find one in the position of the venerable Patriarch so full of ready knowledge about 'even the needy and the poor.' Surely the blessing promised to such will be his."

Speaking for the Archbishop, Father Hayes, his secretary, made the following statement:

"We have every confidence that Pius X will administer the affairs of the Church in the wise, prudent and sagacious manner of Leo XIII, and that he will meet all problems of social, moral and religious life with the divine authority and gifted ability of his predecessor.

"America will find in him a warm and ardent friend as in the late Pontiff. His holiness and learning are beyond question. Like Leo XIII, he ascends the throne less known than some of his colleagues, and like the late Pope, he is a man of great love for humanity. He is also of the same age as Leo when he ascended the throne, although physically far stronger. Our new Holy Father has never served in the diplomatic corps of the Vatican. He is not a man who has visited foreign countries, but he is a great scholar and possesses, I believe, a deep knowledge of human nature.

"Archbishop Farley met Pope Pius during his visit to Venice in 1902. At that time the Archbishop called upon the Cardinal-Patriarch and they had a long interview on the subject nearest to their hearts, the work of the St. Vincent de Paul confraternity among the poor and destitute. This is, you know, the work of which Archbishop Farley was the director here in New York and which the new Pontiff supervised in Venice."

"No one knew his political views," said Bishop O'Connell of Portland. "He never made them known by any public action. In that matter he evidently was governed by the greatest prudence. Whenever the King went to Venice, whenever he was outside the Papal States, Cardinal Sarto manifested great deference to the head of the house of Savoy, but up to the present time no one knows his political attitude toward Victor Emmanuel as monarch."

Americans enjoyed the privilege of being first among those of many other countries who followed to be presented to the Pope John J. McGrane of New York and Father Lynch of Niagara University of Buffalo conducted the American pilgrimage.

Cardinal Gibbons had been asked to try to arrange for the reception of the Americans and had promised to do his best, at the same time explaining how unprecedented it would be for a pope the day after his election to receive a foreign pilgrimage when there were scores of high dignitaries who had not yet been admitted, including even the diplomatic body. Nevertheless he used his influence with the happiest result and secured the consent of the Pope to receive his fellow-countrymen.

From a photograph taken at the Vatican, Rome.

HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIII.

History will record Leo XIII, as having been a wise ruler of his Church, a great leader of his age, a lover of true liberty and a friend of humanity, who, as the successor of St. Peter, was beloved by Catholics of every nation, and as a man, esteemed and honored by the foremost thinkers of every school throughout the entire civilized world.

MOST REV. DIOMEDE FALCONIO,
Third Apostolic Delegate in the United States.

Jubilee Year Appointments For the Church in America.

His Excellency, Most Rev. Diomede Falconio, Apostolic Delegate, Most Rev. John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York, and Most Rev. James Edward Quigley, Archbishop of Chicago.

MOST REV. MGR. FALCONIO,

Third Apostolic Delegate in the United States.

On September 30, 1902, His Holiness, Leo XIII, appointed His Excellency, Mgr. Falconio, Apostolic Delegate to the Church in the United States, as successor to Mgr. Martinelli. His Excellency took possession of his exalted office on November 21st, of the same year. Mgr. Falconio is no stranger to America, having resided and worked on the religious mission for years in the United States, of which he is a naturalized citizen, and having served as Apostolic Delegate in the Dominion of Canada for some years.

His Excellency, Most Rev. Diomede Falconio, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, was born September 20, 1842, at Pescocostanzo, a parish in the Diocese of Monte Casino in the Abruzzi, in Italy. At the age of eighteen he entered the Franciscan Order (September 2, 1860). On the completion of his studies, he was sent as missionary to the United States (November, 1865), and was ordained priest there on the 4th of January, 1866, by Mgr. Timon, Bishop of Buffalo. During his first stay in America, Mgr. Falconio filled several important positions in

the Order; he was first appointed professor of philosophy and vice-president of St. Bonaventure's College at Allegany, N. Y. (1866); then Professor of Theology and Secretary of the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception (1867); finally in 1868 he became President of the College and Seminary of St. Bonaventure. The same year at the request of the Bishop of Harbor-Grace he was sent to Newfoundland by his superiors, and the year following Mgr. Carfagini chose him as his Secretary, and as administrator of the Cathedral.

Mgr. Falconio left Harbor-Grace in 1882, on his departure receiving the most touching demonstrations of esteem and affection.

Having spent one year more in the United States he returned to Italy in 1884, where he was elected Provincial of the Franciscans in the Abruzzi. He was successively re-elected Provincial, and at the same time, charged with the office of Commissary, and Visitor-General of the Province of Naples, 1888, Synodal-Examiner for the Diocese of Aquila, Commissary and Visitor-General of the Franciscan Province in Puglia, 1889.

In October of the same year, the General Chapter of the Franciscan Order, held in Rome, unanimously chose him as Procurator-General, and whilst occupying this post he was several times charged with important missions, such as Commissary and Visitor-General in various Provinces of the Order (1889–1892).

The 11th of July, 1892, when preparing to visit the Provinces of the Order in France, he was preconized Bishop of Lacedonia and consecrated on the 17th of the same month at Rome by His Eminence, Cardinal Monaco La Valletta, Dean of the Sacred College. He made his solemn entrance into the Diocese of Lacedonia the 2nd of February, 1893, and at once began work, winning the respect and affection of clergy, faithful and civil authorities. A few years later, the 29th of November, 1895, the Holy Father raised the Bishop of Lacedonia to the United Archiepiscopal See of Accerenza and Matera, in Basilicata—in which there are one hundred and fifty thousand Catholics. Hence, in the midst of the universal veneration of the people, Leo XIII called Mgr. Falconio, and by Brief dated the 3rd of

MOST REV. JAMES EDWARD QUIGLEY,
Archbishop of Chicago.

MOST REV. JOHN M. FARLEY,
Archbishop of New York.

From an authorized photograph—Copyrighted by Anderson, 402 Columbus Avenue, New York.

August, 1899, appointed him as the first Apostolic Delegate to Canada. He took possession at Quebec on October 1, 1899.

On Thursday, December 8, 1902, feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Apostolic Delegate was publicly received by the authorities of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., and was welcomed by the entire body. This was the first public appearance of the official representative of the Holy See. A more brilliant gathering had never met within the University walls. There were present members of the diplomatic corps, members of the administration, senators and representatives of the United States, presidents and officials of many institutions of learning, and a large gathering of the more prominent residents of the city.

MOST REV. JOHN MURPHY FARLEY,

Elevated to Preside Over the Largest Catholic Archdiocese in the World.

Most Rev. John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York, was born in Newtown Hamilton, Armagh County, Ireland, April 20, 1842, and was the son of Philip Farley and Catherine Murphy. He received his education at St. MacCarten's College, Monaghan, Ireland, and after coming to the United States entered St. John's College, Fordham, New York City. He graduated from St. Joseph's Seminary, Troy, N. Y., in 1866. In that year he was selected by Archbishop, afterwards His Eminence Cardinal McCloskey, to be sent to the American College, Rome, Italy, where he was graduated and ordained to the priesthood by Cardinal Patrizi, Vicar-General of Rome, at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, June 11, 1870. On his return home he was assigned to St. Peter's Church, New Brighton, Staten Island, N. Y., as assistant pastor. In 1872, on the occasion of Bishop McNeirney's elevation to the See of Albany, Cardinal McCloskey made Father Farley his private secretary,

and in 1884, appointed him pastor of St. Gabriel's Church, New York City, to succeed the deceased pastor, Father Clowney.

In 1884, he was made Private Chamberlain with the title of Monsignore, by the Pope, at the request of Cardinal McCloskey; he was appointed Vicar-General in 1891, Domestic Prelate of His Holiness on April 8, 1892, and Prothonotary Apostolic in August, 1895. While pastor of St. Gabriel's, he built the St. Gabriel's parish school, a model educational institution of its kind, the congregation paying $15,000 a year for its maintenance.

In 1886, Mgr. Farley was appointed Consultor, and one of his official advisors by Archbishop Corrigan. As Vicar-General, Mgr. Farley assisted the Most Rev. Archbishop in the government of the diocese. On December 21, 1895, Mgr. Farley was consecrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral with full canonical ceremony titular Bishop of Zeugma, and Auxiliary Bishop of New York, by Archbishop Corrigan, assisted by Right Rev. Bishop McDonnell, of the diocese of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Right Rev. Bishop Gabriel, of the diocese of Ogdensburg, N. Y., the sermon being preached by the Right Rev. Bernard J. McQuaid, Bishop of Rochester.

As Auxiliary Bishop, Mgr., Farley was of great aid in the vast work of the diocese, especially in the performance of episcopal functions. The action of the Roman Curia in elevating Mgr. Farley to the episcopal dignity, a few months only after he was created a Prothonotary Apostolic, was an evidence of the high esteem in which he was held by the Holy See. Previous to his elevation to the episcopacy, Mgr. Farley was for nearly twenty-five years identified with the administration of the diocese. He served for twelve years as secretary, and for the last five years as Vicar-General, besides having been for a long time a member of the Archbishop's Council.

Father Farley's succession to the Archbishopric of New York was hailed with rejoicing. Everybody recognized that an eminently fitting selection had been made. The new prelate was known to be prudent, a good administrator, charitable, perfectly acquainted with the diocese in all details, progressive and priestly.

Priests who had been in daily touch with Mgr. Farley since his ordination in 1870, and laymen who had been close to his work as pastor of St. Gabriels' since 1884, knew of the earnest and resultful labors for the church and for humanity. Recognized by all New York as a man of gentleness and piety, he has other characteristics that shine forth from time to time showing the aggressive, practical, gainful mind.

In 1878, Father Farley, as he then was, accompained His Eminence Cardinal McCloskey, whose secretary he was, to Rome to see the coronation of Leo XIII. Cardinal McCloskey reached Rome too late to participate in the election of the Pope by the College of Cardinals.

Archbishop Fareley, who was just past sixty years of age when he succeeded Arcbishop Corrigan is likely to live to be a Cardinal for the growing importance of the metropolitan of New York in the Catholic Church is not overlooked by the Pope. The Archbishop's active life had left him at sixty vigorous in mind and body to take up the work of the largest and most conspicuous district of the Church in the New World.

As secretary to Cardinal McCloskey and as Auxiliary Bishop, the right hand man of Archbishop Corrigan, Archbishop Farley had little to learn about the duties of his high office. It is fitting that he should come to St. Patrick's Cathedral, for as secretary to the Cardinal he kept all the records of the building of that splendid house of God.

Archbishop Farley's existence is without what, in other men's careers, is called home life. His waking hours are spent entirely for the church. He is a tireless worker, visiting a church one day, a sick priest the next, a distant part of his diocese the next, for confirmation or consultation.

He finds time, however, to read a great deal. That may be said to be his only recreation. He keeps abreast of the news and the events of the day. When he allows himself a vacation it is generally to go to one of the Catholic summer schools, where he is a regular attendant at the lectures. He likes out-of-door life, and where his administrative business calls him he always walks if time will permit.

MOST REV. JAMES EDWARD QUIGLEY

Elevated to Preside Over the Second Largest Archdiocese of the United States.

Among the sturdy Irish immigrants who severed ties of kindred and friendship in the early forties and turned with appreciative hearts and willing hands to identify themselves with the advantages which America with her boundless resources has always offered to those who have sought her shores, were James E. Quigley and his young wife. The place they chose was Oshawa, near Toronto, in the province of Ontario.

Their first child James, now Archbishop of Chicago, was born on October 15, 1855. In the following year his parents removed to Rochester, N. Y., where the other children, three boys and three girls were born.

When the eldest child was old enough to go to school he was sent to St. Patrick's parochial school in that city, and while mastering the rudiments of a common school education, he manifested a brightness and aptitude for study which won him the attention of his immediate instructors, and through them the attention of the priests of the parish, and eventually resulted in his transfer from the somewhat limited sphere of the parochial school to the wider opportunities of the Christian Brothers' College of St. Joseph in the city of Buffalo, N. Y., from which he was graduated with high honors in 1871.

An important and significant event in the schoolboy days of young Quigley was his winning of a West Point scholarship, which it never was his intention of accepting. This was during his last year at St. Joseph's College. The schools of the city of Buffalo were allowed two candidates and he was urged to enter the race as the candidate of the Catholic schools. He carried off the prize with ease, and grandly vindicated not only his own sterling ability, but also the fact that in solid scholarship the followers of La Salle were more than able to hold their own. A conspicuous feature of Father Quigley's priestly career was his devotion to the cause of Catholic education, especially as

taught in the parochial schools. He was for years a member of the Board of Diocesan School Examiners—a creation of his predecessor's, Bishop Ryan, its object being to constantly supervise and elevate the teaching standard in the diocesan schools.

The year following James E. Quigley's graduation from St. Joseph's College, found him enrolled among the students at the Seminary of Our Lady of Angels (now Niagara University), at Suspension Bridge.

He spent the ensuing three years at that institution, expanding his mind with researches in classical studies and assimilating the beautiful principles of moral philosophy of the Church. His record at the Seminary was a succession of brilliant achievements, which followed each other with a rapidity which won him the admiration of his fellow scholars and the commendation of his instructors and superiors.

It was during this first year at the Seminary that his work attracted the attention of Bishop Ryan, of Buffalo, N. Y. That distinguished prelate, ever quick to appreciate merit, recognized in the mind of the brilliant young student material for an exalted career, and from that time until his death he manifested a lively regard for the welfare of his gifted protege.

The following year, 1875, found James E. Quigley pursuing his studies at Innspruck, the great theological seminary of the Jesuits in the Austrian Tyrol. This is the institution where the followers of Loyola, training for holy orders, have instilled in their minds the final and exalted principles which dominated the life of the great founder of their order.

The young student's career at Innspruck formed but another chapter in the story of his development as a student. He was graduated from there with flattering honors and next went to the College of the Propaganda at Rome, where he spent four years, perfecting and broadening his education. He was graduated in the year 1879, and after a brief period of probation, was vested with the holy order of the priesthood. At graduation the order of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him. Soon afterward, on April 13, 1879, he was ordained to the priesthood. The ceremony took place in the Basilica of St. John

Lateran and the dignitary who officiated was Cardinal La Valetta Cardinal-Vicar of Rome.

Father Quigley returned to this country soon afterward, and, after a short visit with his parents and the companions of his boyhood at Rochester, he was appointed by Bishop Ryan to the pastorate of St. Vincent's Church at Attica, N. Y.

Bishop Ryan, realizing the talents and executive ability of the young priest, wished to have him take a broader work, so he called him to the rectorship of St. Joseph's Cathedral, on the resignation of Father Kelly in 1884. The appointment of so young a priest to the important post of rector of the Cathedral was a signal mark of the Bishop's confidence in his zeal and ability; by many it was considered almost in the light of an innovation.

For twelve years Dr. Quigley conducted the onerous and exacting duties of St. Joseph's parish with a fidelity and earnestness which won him the admiration of his fellow-priests and the love and respect of his parishioners.

He found time to personally supervise the education of the children, realizing that the child is father of the man, and that the future of the Church depends upon the Christian education of the children. It is unnecessary to rehearse the innumerable acts of kindness and charity which characterized his work as pastor of the Cathedral, or to dwell upon the splendid executive ability he manifested in looking after its temporal affairs.

On the death of the Right Rev. Mgr. Gleeson, Dr. Quigely was appointed to the irremovable rectorship of St. Bridget's, there to take up the work of building the new church, school and rectory which age and feebleness had so long prevented the late Mgr. Gleeson from carrying out. It was Mgr. Gleeson's long-cherished idea that Father Quigley should assume this work, but when he was appointed to assume the authority of the episcopate, the work devolved on other shoulders. His success and excellent work during the six years of his episcopate in Buffalo are attested by his elevation, after so short a time, to the Archbishopric of Chicago, the second largest Catholic diocese in the United States, and one of the most important in the world.

Scenes and Events

In the

Life of Pope Leo XIII.

COUNT PECCI, FATHER OF LEO XIII.

Those who have been to Carpineto have seen the dark old pile in which the pope was born, writes F. Marion Crawford, with its tower which tops the town, as the dwellings of the small nobles always did in every hamlet and village throughout the south of Europe. For the Pecci were good gentle folk long ago, and the portraits of Pope Leo's father and mother, in their dress of the last century, still hang in their places in the mansion. His Holiness strongly resembles both, for he has his father's brow and eyes, and his mother's mouth and chin. In his youth he seems to have been a very dark man, as clearly appears from the portrait of him painted when he was Nuncio in Brussels at about the age of thirty-four years. The family type is strong. One of the Pope's nieces might have sat for a portrait of his mother. The extraordinarily clear, pale complexion is also a family characteristic. Leo the Thirteenth's face seems cut out of live alabaster, and it is not a figure of speech to say that it appears to emit a light of its own.

LEO XIII

As Poet.

God gave to him a poet's dreamful mind—
  Lit by the stars of fancy, and as bright
  As his own sunny south radiant with light—
A pen of gold, an intellect refined,
Deft skill of style, choice thoughts, like mystic birds,
  That soar in purple lustre from each page;
The stately grace of eloquence in words,
  A prophet's ken, and wisdom of the sage.

In Latin lays, rich with the classic lore
Of ancient Rome, his muse sublimely sang
The glory of the Spirit, Son, and Sire:
Sweet as Hymettan honey evermore,
The Tuscan tongue to tuneful rapture sprang—
Woke by the chords of Leo's silver lyre.

COUNTESS PECCI, MOTHER OF LEO XIII.

As Priest and Prelate.

Anointed priest in manhood's dawning years,
He toiled with zeal in the field of the Lord:
Over his flock keeping true watch and ward,
Healing the sick, drying the orphans' tears,
Pouring the balm of pity on each heart
That grief hath tried and sorrow made its own,
Winning to God, and to the better part,
Lives that henceforth lived but for God alone.

Summers went by, and with them once again
Christ's unction on his priestly brow was shed:
In purple robes, a prelate did he stand;
He ruled with strength within a southern fane,
A mitre, crowned with laurels, on his head,
A crozier in the grasping of his hand.

As Pontiff.

Lumen in cœlo! Lo! yon skies aglow
Shine down—as Sinai's saintly summits shone—
Where Leo sits transfigured on his throne,
Teaching the truths Christ taught long years ago:
An eagle's glance, a lion's strength hath he,
A faith which guards beneath its boundless wings
A myriad souls. Chained to a rock, but free—
A captive yet the kingliest of kings!

Long may he reign from Peter's gilded dome
O'er shores where suns or crystal glaciers gleam,
Westward—still west, and o'er the glowing east—
God's sentry on the seven hills of Rome—
Shepherd of all, ruler and chief supreme,
Pontiff and prelate he—poet and priest!

EUGENE DAVIS.

Early Life and Home of Leo XIII.

NEPHEW AND NIECE OF LEO XIII IN THE GARDEN AT CARPINETO.

THE Pecci family is of noble Siennese origin. The family palace still stands, adjoining the Cathedral Square, in that ancient city. Owing to the troubles that existed between the Siennese and the Florentines, a branch of the Pecci removed to Carpineto, during the time of Clement VII, 1523-34. Many of them, in their new home, attained high distinction in the church and the learned professions. On his maternal side, Leo XIII was descended from the noble house of Prosperi-Buzi, who held in their ancient native city a station equal to that of the Pecci in Carpineto.

COUNTRY HOUSE OF THE PECCI AT CARPINETO.

CARPINETO, the home of the Pecci family, is a little town of about five thousand inhabitants situated in a cleft of the Monti Lepini, a portion of the Volcian range nearest to Velletri. It has been aptly described as "an eagle's nest, placed for security high above the plain, between two gigantic rocks."

At the highest point of the plateau, stands the home of the Pecci, a fifteenth century palatial pile, with a church and the residence of the parochial clergy adjoining.

THE PECCI MANSION AT CARPINETO.

Vincenzo Gioacchino Pecci was sent, when eight years of age, with his elder brother Giuseppe, to the Jesuit College at Viterbo, where he remained six years. His schoolboy letters of this time are replete with interest and grace, and breathe a spirit of tender piety. The ancient town of Viterbo is picturesquely situated amid beautiful surroundings, its walls and towers dating from the Lombard period. Its splendid basilica, with thirteenth century restorations, contains the tombs of Popes Alexander IV, Clement IV, and John XXI, and San Franceso contains the tomb of Adrian V. Many conclaves have been held in the old episcopal palace, a Gothic building of the thirteenth century. Viterbo in the middle ages was a favorite Papal residence, Urban IV, Gregory X, John XXI, Nicholas III, and Martin IV, having been elected there.

JESUITS' COLLEGE AT VITERBO, WHERE LEO XIII WAS EDUCATED.

GENERAL VIEW OF CARPINETO.

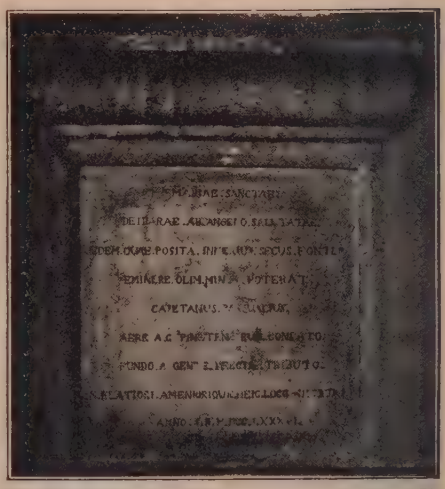
IT is not exceptional and extraordinary length of years alone that Leo has seen; he has seen also the superb results of magnificent success. He has created one hundred and forty cardinals, of whom only fifty-six survive, two Patriarchial Sees—one at Alexandria for the Coptic, and one in India for the Latin Rite; thirteen Metropolitan Sees; thirty-four Archiepiscopal and one hundred and forty Episcopal Sees; fifty Vicariates Apostolic; thirty-five Prefectures and two Abbacies. He has appointed five Apostolic Delegates; twenty Bishoprics have been made Archbishoprics; fourteen Prefectures have been made Vicariates Apostolic, and thirty-five new Prefectures have been established. Pope Leo has canonised eighteen Saints, beatified one hundred and ten, and confirmed the cult of fifty-four English Martyrs. Colleges and schools have sprung up everywhere. Missionaries, Missions, and converts have multiplied; and the vast body of the faithful has grown to be, in all probability, now three hundred million.

BEDROOM OF LEO XIII IN THE PECCI PALACE AT CARPINETO.

THE Carpineto houses, built in an ancient but unmistakably pure style of architecture, and many of them distinguished by armorial bearings, are grouped around two hills. On the higher stand the family mansion of the Pecci, and the Church of St. Leo, a Grecian temple for which the Carpinetans are indebted to their illustrious fellow citizen.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the family mansion—or the Pecci Palace, as it was afterwards called—was occupied by Colonel Ludovico and his wife. The palace, with its barred windows, has an austere and almost monastic appearance. A large modern stairway leads up to a massive double-swing door, adorned with bronze knockers bearing the Pecci arms. While left to his meditations in the salon, the visitor might almost imagine that the Pope in person was doing the honors of the old mansion, for the eye is irresistibly attracted by a full-length portrait of Leo XIII, clad in his Pontifical robes. The noble and expressive countenance of the august original is admirably portrayed. The lips seem about to give utterance to words of greeting.

IN the beginning of the year 1843, Mgr. Pecci was appointed Apostolic Nuncio at Brussels, and to qualify him for the office he was created Archbishop of Damietta. A conflict existed at the time between the Belgian episcopate and the Minister of the Interior, relative to the question of education. The young Nuncio's diplomacy was of such a vigorous, uncompromising, and skilful character that the attack on the imprescriptible rights of the Church in educational matters was defeated. In relation to other difficulties, also, the Nuncio triumphed, but with a moderation and wisdom which could not fail to excite admiration. He was most popular at Court, as well as with the people, and made the acquaintance of many men who were then famous or afterward became so. When, after three years, he left his post to become bishop of Perugia, it occasioned general regret. Before returning to Rome, Mgr. Pecci spent a month in London, where he was cordially received by Queen Victoria, to whom he brought recommendations from her Uncle, the King of Belgium. He afterward visited Austria, Germany and France, where he was welcomed by Louis Philippe.



INSCRIPTION IN THE CHURCH OF ST. LEO AT CARPINETO, ENGRAVED BY LEO XIII WHEN A YOUNG PRIEST.

S.S. LEO XIII IN 1843, ARCHBISHOP OF DAMIETTA AND APOSTOLIC NUNCIO IN BELGIUM.

The Pope's Private Altar in the Leonine Tower.

WHERE THE POPE SAYS HIS DAILY MASS.

THE Pope generally celebrates Mass in a small apartment adjoining his bed-room, and his attendant acts as his acolyte. The altar is raised only one step. On either side of the tabernacle, or case in which the pyx is kept, are some marvelously artistic candelabra and two statues of saints. On certain occasions, large numbers of strangers and pilgrims are admitted as a great favor to hear the Pope's Mass, and to receive Holy Communion at his hands.

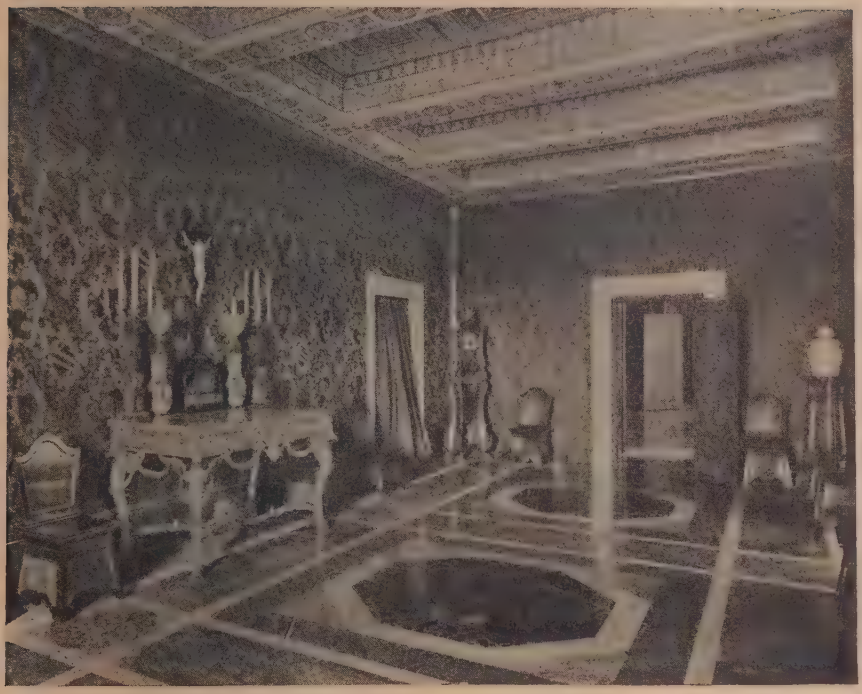
THE furnishings of the Pope's bed-room and apartments in the Leonine Tower, where he spends from two to four weeks in the summer season, are simple but commodious. They are of an antique cast, in keeping with their surroundings, save the chair whereon he rests, which is of modern make and provided with two arm cushions, which serve as pillows for his daily siesta.

THE POPE'S BED IN THE TOWER IN THE VATICAN GARDENS, WHERE HE SPENDS A PORTION OF THE HEATED TERM IN SUMMER.

LEO XIII WHEN NUNCIO AT BRUSSELS, WITH HIS RELATIVES, IN 1867.

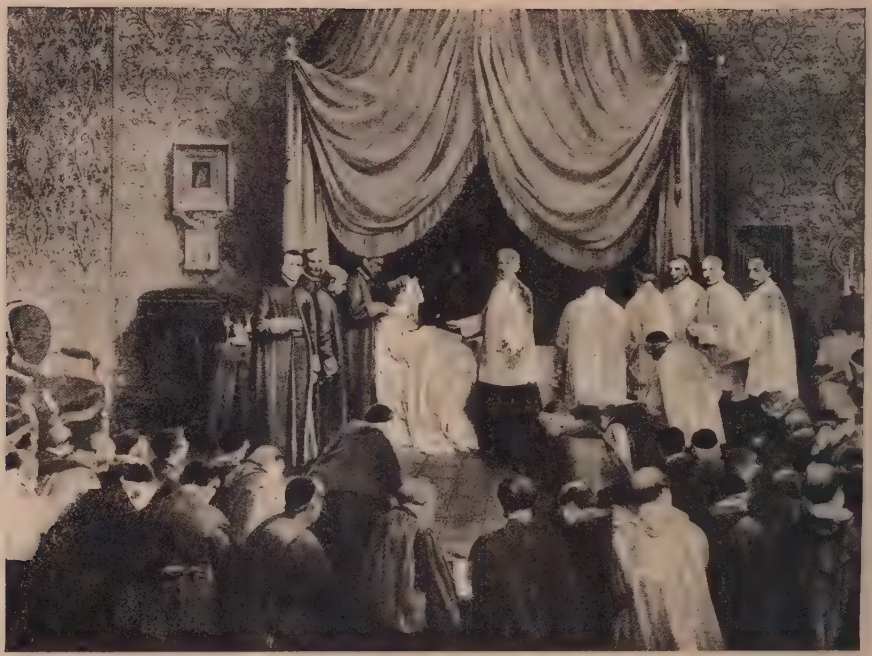
FROM the first, Mgr. Pecci was held in high regard in the Belgian capital. His varied talents, his profound learning, his gentle courtesy, and his many accomplishments made him a favorite with all who came in contact with him. The affability of Mgr. Pecci, his exquisite tact and unerring judgment, soon forced Leopold I, who was a discerning connoisseur of men, to form a very high opinion of him. He endeavored to make him a counsellor and a friend, and induced him to be a frequent visitor at court. The king often conversed freely with him, and took pleasure in propounding all sorts of difficult questions. The Nuncio, however, was never taken aback, so that the king would end by saying; "Really, Monsignor, you are as clever a politician as you are an excellent churchman."

Papal Apartments in the Vatican.



PRIVATE ANTECHAMBER OF LEO XIII.

"LEO Thirteenth" writes F. Marion Crawford, "is the leader of a great organization of Christian men and women spreading all over the world; the leader of a vast body of human thought; the leader of a conservative army which will play a large part in any coming struggle between anarchy and order. He may not be here to direct when the battle begins, but he will leave a strong position for his successor to defend, and great weapons for him to wield, since he has done more to simplify and strengthen the Church's organization than a dozen Popes have done in the last two centuries. Men of such character fight the campaigns of the future many times over in their thoughts, while all the world is at peace around them, and when the time comes at last, though they themselves be gone, the spirit they called up still lives to lead, the sword they forged lies ready for other hands, the roads they built are broad and straight for the march of other feet, and they themselves, in their graves, have their share in the victories that save mankind from social ruin."



MGR. PECCI AT THE DEATH-BED OF PIUS IX.

IN his pastoral of 1878, addressed from Rome to the priests and people of Perugia, Leo XIII, then Camerlengo at the Vatican thus alludes to the death of Pius IX, who had just passed away: "When I began to write this letter I was far from thinking that our glorious Pontiff and most loving Father would be so suddenly snatched away. God in his designs has hastened for his servant the reward merited by the long and precious labors undergone for the Church, our common mother, by his immortal deeds, by the sufferings endured with such constancy, dignity and firmness.

"Dear fellow-laborers, do not forget to make mention in the Holy Sacrifice of this soul in which God had printed so vivid an image of himself. Speak to your flocks of his merits, and tell them how much this great Pope had done not only for the Church and for souls, but also to promote the reign of Christian civilization. I beseech you, dearest brethern and beloved children, to ask earnestly of God to grant soon a Head to the Church, and to cover him when he is chosen with the shield of his power, in order that the Bark of Peter may be safely guided through the surging waters to the wished-for haven."

A Chapel of Unrivalled Beauty.

CHOIR OF THE SIXTINE CHAPEL.

THE famous Sixtine Chapel in the Vatican, was built by Pope Sixtus the Fourth. There are paintings on the walls by Perugino, Luca Signorelli, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, and others, all of which are however, overshadowed by the ceiling and the "Last Judgement" of Michael Angelo.

The chapel is a beautiful place in itself, remarks a recent writer on the subject, by its simple and noble proportions, as well as by the wonderful architectural decorations of the ceiling, conceived by Michael Angelo as a series of frames for his paintings. Beautiful beyond description, too, is the exquisite marble screen. No one can certainly say who made it; it was perhaps designed by the architect of the chapel himself, Baccio Pintelli. There are few such marvels of unknown hands in the world, and a sort of romance clings to them, with an element of mystery that stirs the imagination, in a dreamy way, far more than the gilded oak tree in the arms of Sixtus IV., by which the name of Rovere is symbolized. The famous choir of the Sixtine Chapel, sometimes called the "Pope's Choir" is wholly different from the Choir of St. Peter's. No musical instruments are ever employed in the Sixtine.

Institution of the Swiss Guard.

THE institution of the Swiss Guards dates back to 1503 under the pontificate of Julius II, who arranged with the cantons of Zurich and Lucerne that they supply him with a body-guard of 250 men. At the present time the guards consist of 117 members; the conditions of admission being that the candidate must belong to either of the cantons mentioned, be a Catholic, a celibate, not over twenty-five years of age, of strong physique, and not under five feet six inches in height. The pay is modest, the duties are light, and a pension is granted after thirty years of service. Many men of good birth are to be found among the Swiss Guard, and they not infrequently devote their leisure to painting, sculpture and music; some even find time to take a law or arts degree at the University of Rome. Their beautiful uniform was designed by Michael Angelo. Their sole duty is to keep guard at the outer doors and in the corridors of the Vatican, where their fine appearance make a great impression on visitors.

SWISS GUARDS PRECEDING THE PONTIFICAL PROCESSION.

ENTRANCE TO THE VATICAN—THE SWISS GUARDS GATE.

Beginning of a Glorious Reign.

WHEN Pope Leo XIII was elevated to the supreme Pontificate he was in his sixty-eighth year, and apparently could not look forward to a long reign. He had worked with untiring energy in his bishopric of Perugia for more than two and thirty years, promoting every good work that concerned religion, education and the practical welfare of his people, establishing colleges, schools, hospitals, and all manner of charitable associations. To the observer this frail body, bending under the weight of years and worn out with the labors of an ordinary lifetime could not bear up for long under the weight of the responsibilities that would now devolve upon him. Yet what a glorious future for himself and the Church awaited him. It is doubtful if ever any Pontiff was more nobly fitted and excellently equipped for meeting the requirements of his age than Leo XIII, or one who has left a greater impress on the future of the Church than he is destined to exercise.

THE PONTIFICAL THRONE.

LEO XIII AT THE TIME OF HIS ACCESSION.

AN INTERIOR COURT IN THE VATICAN GARDENS.

THE LEONINE TOWER IN THE VATICAN GARDENS.

THE Vatican Gardens comprise about eight hundred acres, and contain many fine driveways and walks. In good summer weather, the Pope generally walks or drives in the gardens, which he greatly enjoys, and takes pleasure in talking about flowers and plants to the director of the gardens.

The Leonine Tower in the Vatican Gardens dates from the end of the ninth century, and the reign of Leo IV, who built it to protect the city of Rome against the Saracens. It is a massive structure, and consists of three stories, or floors.

THE VATICAN GARDENS—THE SWISS SUMMER-HOUSE.

THE VATICAN GARDENS—THE LEONINE TOWER.

HIS HOLINESS in the pleasant summer season enjoys walking in the Vatican gardens. He does not disdain to occasionaly chat with the gardner, and even give him good advice, for the Pope is by no means ignorant of horticulture, and is keenly interested in agriculture. It is not easy to gain admission to the gardens, as when the weather is fine his Holiness is liable to go there at any time. The grounds are well laid out and contain many walks and drives, with frequent resting places.

In The Vatican Grounds.

IN a grove of trees on a hill stands the famous little villa, constructed several centuries ago by Leo IV. This exceedingly interesting miniature palace, which Leo XIII has rendered celebrated as his holiday residence, is equipped with all modern appliances, —telephones, electric lights, elevators, and the like. Here during the week or two that he remains abroad in the garden, Leo XIII often celebrates his daily Mass.

THE VATICAN.—INTERIOR OF THE COUNTRY HOUSE.

HIS HOLINESS LEO XIII, TAKING HIS RECREATION IN THE VATICAN GARDENS.

LEO XIII TAKES HIS USUAL EXERCISE IN THE VATICAN GARDENS

THE HOLY FATHER RESTS AFTER HIS WALK IN THE GARDEN.

One of Leo's Most Faithful Attendants.

PIO CENTRA, VALET OF LEO XIII.

CAVALIERE PIO CENTRA, Leo XIII's *valet de chambre*, is the son of a former valet of Cardinal Pecci. Some years ago he owned a hatters' establishment in Rome, which he gladly handed over to his brother in order to enter the Pope's service when the post of *ajutante di camera* became vacant. He has enobled his humble duties by the devotion with which they have been fulfilled, and the Pope has shown his appreciation of this devotion by making him a chevalier of the Order of St. Gregory. Pinccio, as Pio Centra is familiarly called, lives with his family close to the Pope's private chambers, so that he can attend on call to the smallest requirement of his master.

He enters the Pope's little bedroom about six o'clock in the morning, and usually finds his master already risen. Pio Centra also serves the Holy Father's Mass, when he says it in the chapel of his private apartments. On Sundays and feast days he says it in another chapel preceding the throne room.

Officials of the Pope's Household.

MGR. CONSTANTINI ALMONER TO LEO XIII.

THE nine ecclesiastical participant secret *camerieri* are: Mgr. Joseph Maria Constantini, titular Archbishop of Patras and High Almoner to his Holiness; Mgr. Alexander Volpini, Secretary for Princely Briefs; Mgr. Louis Tripipi, Assistant Secretary of State and Secretary for the Cipher; Mgr. Agapit Panici, Sub-Datarius; Mgr. Vincent Tarozzi, Secretary for Latin Letters; Mgr. Cajetan Bisleti, Cup-bearer; Mgr. Louis Misciatelli, Secretary of Embassy, who conveys the Papal messages to sovereigns and heads of reigning houses; Mgr. Raphal Merry del Val, Master of the Wardrobe; and finally, Mgr. the Prince of Croy, last participant secret *camerierc*, who has no special functions.

Besides those already mentioned the chief functionaries most closely attached to the Pope's person are the Cardinal Palatins, four in number, and so called because they formerly resided in the Pontifical palace; the Prelate Palatins, who also number four Prelates of his Holiness' household, comprising the college of prelates attendant on the throne, the prelatical college of apostolic prothonotaries, the prelatical college of auditors of the Rota, the prelatical college of clerics of the Apostolic Chamber, prelatical college of voters and referees of the signature, and the college of abbreviators, and a host of supernumerary and honorary personages and individuals.

Physicians to Leo XIII.

DOCTOR GAETANO MAZZONI.

OF all the personages attached to the Papal household none, perhaps, occupies a more important position, or attracts more attention than his private physician, Dr. Lapponi. His mere arrival at an unusual time, whether he has been sent for or comes of his own accord, gives rise to the most sensational rumors. Dr. Lapponi tends his illustrious patient not only with very great skill but with boundless devotion This devotion is all the more meritorious when it is remembered that Leo XIII is not exactly an easy patient to deal with. Dr. Lapponi has the utmost trouble to get the Pope to follow his orders, and sometimes he finds that his orders have been wholly ignored. In 1903, on the occasion of his jubilee, Leo was in ill health and worn out with the numerous audiences and functions, and positively refused to omit the fatiguing labors, replying to the protestations of his physician, that this performance of his duty transcended all other considerations, even that of his health or life. In the absence of Dr. Lapponi, his place is taken by Dr. Mazzoni, who likewise enjoys the fullest confidence of his illustrious patient.

DOCTOR LAPPONI.

A Prince of The Church and a Brother of the Pope.

CARDINAL Ludochowski was appointed archbishop of Gnesen and Posen in 1866, becoming thereby primate *ex officio* of Poland. In 1873 he took a leading part in protesting against the Prussian anti-Catholic laws, in consequence of which he was for a time imprisoned, and compelled to leave his see. He proceeded to Rome, and was appointed cardinal, 1875, and Prefect of the Propaganda, which office he filled until his death, in 1902.

CARDINAL LUDOCHOWSKI LATE PREFECT OF THE PROPAGANDA.

GIOVAN BATTISTA PECCI, BROTHER OF LEO XIII.

Giovan Battista Pecci was born in 1802, and died in 1881. He married and left several children. The other members of the Pecci family were Carlo, born 1793, and died in Rome 1879; Anna Maria born, 1798, died 1870; Caterina, born, 1800, died 1867; Guiseppe, born, 1807, died, 1890; Gioacchino, born March, 1810; and Ferdinando born, 1816, died while a student at college in his fourteenth year.

MGR. PIFFERI, SACRISTAN TO LEO XIII.

MGR. PIFFERI, sacristan of the Apostolic places, and confessor to Leo XIII, is an Augustine friar. He is the confidant of the Pope's inmost thoughts, but after having received them he advises and orders, his office entitling him to speak with a master's authority to the head of the Church, when that head of the Church kneels humbly before him. Every week Leo implores pardon for his faults like the merest sinner. Every week, he whose spiritual powers are limited by the Divine law alone, kneels before another man and says, as the humblest of the faithful would do: 'I confess to the Omnipotent God, *and to you father*, because I have sinned, and I implore you to intercede for me with our Lord.' And this man, whom the father of all the faithful calls his father, has the strange power of invoking Christ's pardon on the Vicar of Christ. *Ego te absolvo.* What a lesson of humility! To minds enamored of liturgical beauties, can the Catholic religion offer anything more admirable or more touching?"

MGR. MAZZOLINI, PRIVATE CHAPLAIN TO LEO XIII.

Officials of the Pope's Household.

MGR. DELLA VOLPE MAJOR-DOMO TO LEO XIII.

"THE chief duty of Mgr. Angeli is to take charge of His Holiness' private correspondence, but the confidence with which the Pope rightly rewards Mgr. Angeli's exceptional devotion has gradually brought about a considerable increase in this prelate's privileges and prerogatives. It may be readily understood that the post of Secretary to such a man as Leo XIII is not exactly a sinecure. The Pope and his Secretary often work sixteen hours a day; and even when Mgr. Angeli has retired to rest from his labors, it is by no means certain that his slumbers will not be suddenly disturbed by a summons from the Pope's chamber. Leo XIII sleeps very little, and as he cannot endure prolonged inactivity, he frequently fills up the time of waiting for Morpheus by wooing the Muse, or thinking out some encyclical whereof the first sheets are lying on his writing table. Perhaps his ideas crystallize into some formula which he fears he may forget before morning. His hand instinctively moves to the electric button close to his bed. Three minutes later Mgr. Angeli arrives, half aleep, resignedly seats himself at his table, and writes, from the Master's dictation, a set of Latin verses, or one of those wonderful compositions that carry the bread of truth from Rome to the uttermost parts of the earth. Mgr. Angeli's friends and all *habitués* of the Vatican constantly wonder how he can endure such a strain, but he does endure it very well, and has no thought of complaining. His excessive devotion, it might be said, finds nourishment in the excessive fatigue to which that devotion condemns him."

MGR. ANGELI, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO LEO XIII.

MGR. CAGIANO DI AZEVEDO *maître de chambre* to Leo XIII, has jurisdiction over everything and everybody connected with the daily working of the Vatican, and is the personage to whom all applications for an audience should be addressed.

Twice in the long history of the Papacy from the days of Peter has God ordained the Sovereign Pontiffs should reign as long in Rome as did the Galilean Fisherman. Two reigns, each extending beyond a Silver Jubilee, have come, one after the other, emphasizing thus the ever-during character of their spiritual dominion while empires fall and thrones are overturned or moulder into dust. National policies have varied, society itself has been reset, "Europe has been remade ten times in a hundred years," yet through more than half of those hundred years have extended the conjoined Pontificates of two Roman Pontiffs, over a mighty spiritual kingdom, which in spite of hostility almost unparalleled, and while States and Churches have been and are in a very vertigo of instability, has only grown greater, more loyal, and more numerous. The Papacy alone remains, and its policy remains, while as types of character, the rulers who hold its sceptre in an age of change, seem to defy time itself as they defy the tempests of revolution.

LEO XIII AND THE PONTIFICAL COURT.

THE PONTIFICAL COURT consists of the Cardinal Secretary of State; the Cardinal pro-prefect of the Holy Apostolic Palaces, "a personage of the highest importance, who has sole control of everything connected with the Vatican Palace and all the vast mass of adjoining buildings; the Maggiordomo, who, besides many other functions, is the manager of the museums, galleries and inhabited apartments; the Maestro di Camera, who nearly corresponds to a master of ceremonies and superintends all audiences; the almoner and manager of the papal charities, assisted by a distinguished priest, who is also a lawyer, formerly secretary to the well-known Monsignor de Merode; a monk of the Dominican order, who supervises the issuing of books printed at the Vatican; a chief steward; four private secretaries, who take turns of service lasting a week for each, and are always with the Pope, and finally the chief of the Vatican police. Moreover his Holiness has his private preacher, who delivers sermons before him in Advent and Lent, and his confessor, both of whom are always Capuchin monks, in accordance with a very ancient tradition."

MGR. SAMBUCETTI AND COUNT SODERINI MASTERS OF THE CEREMONIES TO LEO XIII.

MGR. CESARE SAMBUCETTI, titular Archbishop of Corinth, is Secretary to the Congregation of Ceremonials. This Congregation arranges all the Pontifical ceremonies and decides questions of participation and precedence in them.

Rome as the See of Peter, is necessarily the focus of all the thought and all the activity which conserve and diffuse religious truth and practice and discipline throughout the world. There all departments of doctrinal teaching, of liturgical observance, of jurisdictional administration, of moral rule, of sacramental dispensation, of devotional life, are superintended by the several congregations which are the agencies through which the Vicar of Christ fulfils most of the duties of his tremendous office. These congregations are unceasingly employed in answering the questions, settling the controversies, and deciding the practical cases which concern the religious life of Christians in every land under the sun.

MACE-BEARER AND MGR. MAZZOLINI PRIVATE CHAPLAIN TO LEO XIII.

THE mission of Leo XIII has been the infusing of a Christian element into the movement of the nations of the world toward more democratic institutions. With the clear and practised eye of a great statesman he has seen that there has been a change in the basis of power; that it is no longer dynasties or ruling families that mould the destinies of nations, but the power is from below, from among the common people. The state of unrest, the now and then harsh breathings of revolution, the ferment of the socialistic movement, the reaching out of the masses of the people for their God-given rights—all these are indications of the awakening unto a new life, of a being of wonderful energy and of tremendous vitality. It has been the mission of Leo to baptize and Christianize this new energy, to bring the Church on her natural side in touch with the legitimate aspirations of the masses towards greater knowledge and a broader liberty, and thus, by ingratiating herself into the convictions and entwining herself into the affections of the people, to pursue her divine mission of saving mankind.

The Picturesque Army of the Vatican.

UNIFORMS OF THE HOUSEHOLD TROOPS OF LEO XIII.

THE Popes made Rome. If the Papacy saved Italy, it also made Rome what it is. Were it not for the Roman Pontiffs, Rome would have shared the fate of Memphis and Babylon; it would be a nameless and shapeless heap of ruins in a wilderness swept by pestilence. "It is not necessary," writes Leo XIII, "to recall the immense benefit and the glory with which the Popes have covered the city of their choice—a glory and benefaction which are written in undestructible letters upon the monuments and the history of all ages. Rome belongs to the Popes by titles such and so many that no prince, whoever he be, can show the like for any city in his kingdom." The story of civilization is the story of Rome, and the story of Rome is the story of the Popes. And yet, although Rome is not Rome without the Pope, the Pope resides there only on the sufferance of a government that is the transitory product of a revolution.

St. Peters as Seen from the Vatican Gardens.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE VATICAN GARDENS.

IN his Lenten pastoral for 1877, Leo XIII, then Cardinal Archbishop of Perugia, thus alludes to the hypocritical pretense of the oppressors of the Church, as justifying their actions under the abused and vague term of *civilization*: "If people turn into ridicule the word of God and of him who represents God on earth, it is because civilization requires it. It is civilization which demands that a limit should be put to the number of churches and of the ministers of worship, and which, on the contrary, asks to have the dens of sin multiplied. It is civilization which calls for theatres without good taste and without any respect for modesty. In the name of civilization they give usurers liberty to exact the most enormous interest, and speculators to realize the most dishonest gains. It is in the name of civilization that an immoral press poisons souls; that art prostituting itself, defiles the sense with hideous figures, and thus opens up the way to corrupt the heart. Hence the beginning of that struggle (*Kultur Kampf*) which its authors call the battle for civilization, but which with greater propriety should be called the violent oppression of the Church."

A Leader of his Age.

HIS HOLINESS, LEO XIII.
From an original photograph taken during the latter part of his pontificate.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

PROTESTANT FICTIONS ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Some Things Catholics Do Not Believe.
False Charges Refuted.

BY

HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. ARCHBISHOP WALSH

OF TORONTO, CANADA

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CONDEMNED WITHOUT EXAMINATION.

"RETURN to judgment, for they have borne false testimony against her" (Daniel xiii. 49).

When the chaste Susanna was condemned to death through the false testimony of wicked men, and was being led to execution, the Prophet Daniel cried out to the assembled multitude: "Ye men of Israel, why are you so foolish, that without examination or knowlege of the truth, you have condemned a daughter of Israel?" The case was reopened, the condemned woman was adjudged innocent, and her virtue and honor were vindicated.

Now this historic incident has a very appropriate application to the case of the Catholic Church. Without knowledge or examination of the truth, the Church of Christ is condemned as fallen, corrupt, and apostate on false testimony, and unthinking multitudes believe her guilty when on honest examination of her real teachings they would find her innocent of the wicked charges of error in doctrine and corruption in moral teaching made against her. I say to these men: "Why are you so foolish, that without examination or knowledge of the truth you condemn a great historic Church? 'Return to judgment, for they have borne false witness against her.'"

The Church Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman, is a great and world-wide institution that challenges the attention and the study of mankind. It exists in the world since the days when the Son of God Incarnate dwelt, and toiled, and taught among men, and revealed to their wondering minds the eternal and saving truths which constitute His holy religion and which have since illumined the whole firmament of time. It was instituted by Christ to represent Him, and to do His work in the world when He should have returned to His eternal throne; that is to say, to teach the whole doctrine of Christ with authority and inerrancy, and to apply, through His ordinances, the merits of His atonement to immortal souls. It bears upon its brow the marks and characteristics that distinguish and differentiate it from all false churches. It is One in doctrine, in worship, and in government. It is Holy in its Founder, in its teachings and ministrations, and in the number of its children who have been eminent for holiness of life in all ages. It is Catholic or universal in time and space, and fills the whole world with the majesty of its presence; and it is Apostolic in its doctrines and in its ministry. It holds Christ's commission to be in His stead the official teacher of His revelation to the world. It was to it, in the person of the Apostles, Christ said: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go teach all nations, and behold, I am with you all days down to the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 19).

THE TESTIMONY OF GLADSTONE.

It is the mother of Christian civilization. It converted the pagan world, and when the Roman Empire was broken into fragments by the barbarian hosts that, like an irresistible and destructive avalanche, rushed down upon it from the northern forests, it converted and civilized those iron men, and bowed down their stubborn necks to the sweet yoke of Christ. There is no Christian nation in existence that does not owe to the Church its Christianity and its civilization. It is the most ancient and venerable institution that exists on earth. It carries the mind back to the times when the Apostles of Christ preached in Jerusalem and Athens and Rome and Antioch, when her children were denounced by pagan writers as the enemies of the human race—"*hostes humani generis*"—and when they were worried and torn by wild beasts in the Colosseum for the amusement of Roman citizens. It has come down through all the ages doing the Divine Master's work, teaching, civilizing, and saving mankind

There is no human sorrow for which the Church has not a consolation, no deep wound of the broken heart for which she has not a healing balm. There is no questioning of the troubled soul for which she has not a satisfying answer, no dark problem of human life for which she holds not the solution. Veronica-like, she has wiped the sweat and blood and tears from the face of suffering humanity. Into every Gethsemane of human suffering she has entered like an angel of consolation. In every centre of population her hospitals have sprung up like blessed probaticas for the healing and comfort of the sick and suffering, while her institutions of higher learning and her primary schools dot the civilized world. The Hon. William Ewart Gladstone has this to say of the Catholic Church: "She has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of human civilization, and has harnessed to her chariot, as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world; her art the art of the world; her genius the genius of the world; her greatness, glory, grandeur, and majesty have been almost, though not absolutely, all that in these respects the world has had to boast of." . . . Her children are more numerous than all the members of the sects combined; she is every day enlarging the boundaries of her vast empire; her altars are raised in every clime, and her missionaries are to be found wherever there are men to be taught the Evangel of immortality, and souls are to be saved. And this wondrous church, which is as old as Christianity and as universal as mankind, is to-day after its twenty centuries of age as fresh and as vigorous and as fruitful as on that day when the Pentecostal fires were showered upon the earth. Surely such an institution challenges the attention and demands and deserves the most serious examination of those outside its pale.

FALSELY ACCUSED—A HEARING DENIED.

But nevertheless this great historic Church is denied a hearing by the Protestant world. She is shunned as though she were some ferocious wild beast that it would be fatal to approach. She is denounced as a corrupt, fallen, and apostate church. Like her Divine Founder, her face is besmeared with the spittle of unreasoning crowds. Her great history is unread and unknown, her doctrines are misrepresented, and in the estimation of many well-meaning people she is everything that is false, wicked, and absurd. She is the enemy of God's revealed Word. She hates the Scriptures and

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shuts them up as a sealed book from her deceived and deluded followers. These followers she keeps in utter darkness and in spiritual slavery, and in order to hold them fast in spiritual blindness and thraldom she uses an unknown tongue in her public worship and devotions. She is a shameless and wicked idolater, substituting for divine honors and worship the creature instead of the Creator, and placing the Virgin Mary in the place of the Redeemer of mankind.

She practically denies the atonement of the Cross and has more faith in the prayers of saints than in the merits of our crucified Redeemer. She tries to rob God of a power which essentially and inalienably belongs to Him alone—the God-power of forgiving sins—by pretending and claiming that she also can forgive sins, and that what she looses on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and what she binds on earth shall be bound also in heaven. These are some of the charges made against the Catholic Church, and they are made so authoritatively and persistently that multitudes of well-meaning people believe them as though they were Gospel truths, instead of being utter falsehoods, and would think it the height of absurdity and the acme of brazen effrontery to deny them. And so, thousands of good religious and well-meaning people turn away their faces from the Catholic Church, refuse her a hearing, contemptuously decline to examine her teachings, and look upon her with fear, hatred, and loathing. Now is this fair? Is it right and just? Is it in this way that men act in social and political life? Is this mode of conduct in harmony with the intelligence of the age, in conformity with justice and fair play, and in consistency with that spirit of impartial inquiry and investigation which in other respects is characteristic of this nineteenth century? If you wish to know the truth about the character and standing of citizens, do you go to their enemies to learn it? If you wish to know the merits of the Liberal Party or policy do you go to the Tories for information, and, *vice versa*, if you desire accurate information about the merits of the national policy is it to the leaders of the Liberal Party you go for such information?

DEMANDS INVESTIGATION—LORD MACAULAY.

Now, dear brethren, if such a mode of action would be considered as foolish, meaningless, and absurd where there is question of seeking and obtaining correct information respecting the character of neighbors, or the merits of the respective policies of the Liberals and

Tories, surely it is more absurd to go to professed enemies of the Catholic Church for correct knowledge regarding her tenets, regarding the doctrines which she holds, believes, and teaches to her children. In order to acquire such information, common sense and justice require that men should go to her authoritative expositions of her doctrines, that they should go to her official teachers to learn what the Catholic Church really and truly holds and teaches. The Catholic Church demands investigation, she claims a hearing. She claims she is the oracle of God and the Spouse of Christ, and the legitimate mother of His children; and therefore, in the words of Macaulay, a Protestant historian, there never was, and there is not now, on earth an institution so well deserving of examination as the Catholic Church. But you must go to the true sources of information regarding her claims and her doctrine, you must read and study her books, you must hear and consult her bishops and her priests, and then form your judgment and draw your conclusions, instead of basing your opinions on the misstatements and misrepresentations of her adversaries and traducers. Now I contend that the Church is most grossly misrepresented and misunderstood, that her teachings are falsified, and that there are doctrines and practices imputed to her which she not only does not hold or observe, but which from her whole soul she abhors, condemns, and anathematizes. I will refer to some of these just now, and in doing so I shall say to our separated brethren what Daniel said to the accusers of the chaste Susanna: "Are ye so foolish, ye children of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth ye have condemned a daughter of Israel? Return to judgment, for they have borne false witness against her" (Daniel xiii. 48, 49).

THE PROTECTOR OF GOD'S WORD.

First, then, it is false to affirm that the Catholic Church is the enemy of God's revealed word, or that she forbids the reading of the Scriptures to her children. She teaches that the Scripture is the revealed world of God, that every tittle of it was written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that in the words of St. Paul to Timothy, "All Scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice" (2 Tim. iii. 16).

With a mother's care she protected and saved the written Word during the bloody persecutions which the Roman Empire for three hundred years carried on against her and everything that belonged

to her, including the Scriptures. She protected and saved them during the ages when the fierce northern pagan barbarians swept in a tide of destruction over Europe, burning, pillaging, and wasting everything in their path. It was she that settled the canon of the Scripture, and authoritatively decided what books were canonical and true Scripture and what must be considered as spurious. For centuries she kept hundreds and thousands of children employed in translating and transcribing the Word of God, aye, and in letters of gold and on parchment of purple, to show veneration and love for God's Word. She causes it to be read in her public services and to be expounded to her people. The priests are bound under the most solemn obligation to read daily for an hour the Scriptures and commentaries on the Scriptures. Her commentaries on it are the best and most learned ever written. Catholic kings and emperors in the Middle Ages, when wishing to testify their regard and reverence to friends or to religious men, could find nothing more expressive of their esteem than copies of the Scriptures, and these copies were not infrequently written in letters of gold and covered with purple, and ivory, and precious stones. And when printing was invented the Church made use of this new art which was about to revolutionize the world to disseminate the Word of God in the vernacular among the people. Thus in Germany a Catholic version was printed nearly sixty years before Luther's translation; in fact, five different Catholic versions of Scripture in the vulgar tongue were published in Germany before Luther's Bible appeared. The very same thing occurred in Spain, Italy, and France (see letter of Pope Pius VI. to the Archbishop of Florence on the popular use of the Bible, in first page of the Douay Bible). From these facts it is evident that it is false and unjust to accuse the Catholic Church of being opposed to the Scriptures. On the contrary it is her child and she is its mother, and she has ever protected, guarded, and fostered it with a mother's loving care. But the Church is not only the friend and guardian of Scripture; she is also its divinely appointed official interpreter and teacher. The Bible as read and interpreted by each individual for himself was never intended by Christ to be the rule of faith and of morals. There are overwhelming arguments and irrefragable facts against this Protestant theory. 1st. Christ never wrote a word of the Bible. 2d. He never commissioned His Apostles to write it. 3d. The Bible was not entirely written and completed until about sixty-five years after the Ascension of Our Lord. 4th. Until the time of the invention of printing, nearly fifteen hundred years of the

Christian era, it was a physical impossibility to disseminate the Bible so as to bring it within the reach of all; and lastly, the vast majority of the people could not read it even though they had copies of it. The unlearned and unstable wrest it to their own destruction. Christ Our Lord appointed His Church to be the guardian and teacher of His revealed Word to His people. Just as the civil society and the governing power make laws and appoint judges to expound their true meaning, so Christ the Divine Lawgiver appointed and commissioned His Church to interpret and teach the true meaning of His revealed Word to His people. "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." "Go teach the Gospel to every creature. He that heareth you heareth Me. He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican." "Christ gave some Apostles," etc. "Faith cometh by hearing"—it would not come by hearing but by reading if the Protestant theory were true (Rom. x. 17).

This is the relation of the Church Catholic toward Holy Scripture. She is its divinely appointed guardian and its unerring teacher. She is not guilty of the absurdity of telling every man, woman, and child to read the Bible and to make out their religion from its pages. We see what the result of this theory has been in the innumerable sects that now exist outside the Church, all pretending to read and to understand the true meaning of the Bible and all differing in their understanding of it. Such endless divisions and such multitudes of warring sects generated by the principle of Protestantism have filled the world with doubts regarding the divinity of Christianity, have supplied the infidel with powerful arguments, and have served to bring the religion of Christ into contempt. There is but one God and one true Faith, and that Faith is kept in its unity, purity, and integrity by the Church Catholic, which interprets God's Word by virtue of a divine commission and divine authority.

WHY SHE USES THE LATIN TONGUE.

Again, it is charged that the Catholic Church uses an unknown tongue in her services in order to keep her children in ignorance and to clothe her worship with the cloak of mystery. The Catholic Church makes use of the Latin tongue in her public worship in the Western Church and of the Greek in the Eastern for the following reasons: The Church is universal, her mission is to all mankind.

Were she a mere national church, an English church, or French or Italian, she would doubtless employ in her services the language of the nation of which she was the Church. But the Catholic Church, being a universal Church, makes use of one unvarying language, in her public worship in all the nations, to at once typify her unity and her universality, her worship being the same and in the same tongue in every country under the sun. The doctrines of the Church are definite, precise, and unchanging. She therefore makes use of a dead tongue, the meaning of whose words is fixed and unchanging, to enunciate and crystallize her doctrines and creeds. The meaning of words of living languages changes very frequently and could not fittingly express unalterable and unchanging dogmas. Besides, Latin was the language of the civilized world when the Church began her mission, and continued so to be during the first four centuries of the Christian era. It was the language in which she evangelized and Christianized the great Roman world. But when that world became divided into various nationalities speaking divers tongues, the Church still retained her primitive language and thus remained unchanged in her speech as well as in her constitution. This language, therefore, connects her with the Apostolic age, and she still continues to speak and use it because she is one, Apostolic, unchanging, and Catholic. But not on that account are her people ignorant of her worship and her liturgical devotions. They are taught from their infancy the meaning of the worship and public devotions of the Church. Their prayer-books contain translations of her Latin services, the Epistles and Gospels are read in the vulgar tongue by the pastor, and sermons are regularly preached in English, and her doctrines are taught and explained in the vernacular tongues of her children. Besides, many of the public devotions, such as the Way of the Cross and the Rosary, and the Litanies, are conducted in English.

REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST ALONE.

Again, it is said that the Church ignores our Saviour and depreciates the work of the Redemption, and robs the Atonement of its all-sufficient value. The accusation is utterly false, unjust, and calumnious. The Catholic Church teaches that Christ is the Incarnate Son of God, that He is the Redeemer and Saviour and Teacher of mankind, that He is very God and very Man, having one divine personality, "that He is our only Mediator of Redemption, that there is no

salvation in any other name under Heaven given to men whereby they can be saved." She teaches that one drop of the blood of Christ would have been sufficient to redeem ten thousand guilty worlds, and that in shedding His Blood for us He purchased us with a great price; that that Blood shed on Calvary ascended up through all the ages to the very gates of Paradise in its power, and that it in principle and potency washed away the guilt of all the ages; that no child of Adam ever entered Heaven or ever can enter Heaven save through the merits of the Atonement of Christ. All her prayers are offered up in the name of Christ Jesus, and her children bow the head in loving reverence and adoration at the very sound of that name, thus carrying out in spirit the words of St. Paul, that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bend, of those that are in Heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus is the glory of the Father; and they believe the same Apostle that "neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

She at all times defended the Divinity of Christ against unbelievers. For three hundred years she defended the Divinity of Christ against the Arians. She assembled councils and condemned their destructive heresy. She endured the anger of kings and emperors in defence of this fundamental doctrine of Christian faith, and her bishops, priests, and children suffered persecution, exile, and death to uphold it. And yet we are confidently and impudently but most falsely told that the Church ignores Christ and His Redemption. Millions of her children, bishops, priests, monks, and nuns have consecrated themselves to lives of voluntary poverty, chastity, and obedience in imitation of Christ their Redeemer, and for His dear sake have given up the world and its pleasures, allurements, and seductions to consecrate themselves to the service of the poor, the ignorant, the sick, the suffering, and afflicted. The Catholic Church opposed to Christ! Why, if it were not for her it is most doubtful if Faith in Christ would exist in any corner of the earth to-day.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

The Catholic Church is accused of adoring the Blessed Virgin and of giving her divine honor, and of placing her before and above her

Redeemer in the work of man's Redemption, and salvation. In other words, the Church is charged with being guilty of the heinous and abominable crime of idolatry. This accusation is false, wicked, and cruelly unjust. The Church abhors the sin of idolatry and has labored for centuries to destroy it from the face of the earth, and she teaches that the Blessed Virgin is a mere creature and that Christ is her Redeemer as well as of all the other children of Adam; that she being a creature, it would be a damnable sin to adore her or give her divine honors; that there is an infinite distance between God the Creator and a mere creature; that God is infinite perfection and that the creature is finite, and that to God alone should be reserved supreme worship and divine honor and adoration. And hence of God alone we ask grace and mercy, but of the Blessed Virgin and the saints we only ask the assistance of their prayers. But we honor the Blessed Virgin, because she is the Mother of Christ our God and Redeemer, because as such she is the most perfect creature that ever issued from the hands of God. But the honor we pay to her is not the supreme honor due to God, but the inferior and infinitely different honor which is due to a creature even the most perfect. We call her blessed because she herself, inspired by the Holy Ghost, prophesied that all generations should call her blessed. God honored her by choosing her for His mother, and the Archangel honored her when he hailed and greeted her with being "full of grace," and as having God with her in an especial manner. And surely it is but right and proper to honor her whom God Himself so much honored. Besides, in honoring her we but honor the gifts and graces which God so abundantly bestowed upon her and which crowned her with honor and glory. We also pay an inferior honor to the saints because they are the friends of God, and thus do we, in accordance with the injunction of the Psalmist, praise God in His saints. As the moon shines by the reflected light of the sun, but does not dim his glory, nor rob him of the effulgence of his rays, so the Blessed Virgin and the saints shine by the reflected light of God's beauties and perfections, that is, by His graces and His gifts. But instead of diminishing the honor and the glory which are essentially His, they but serve to increase and intensify it. Of God we ask mercy and pardon, but we only ask the saints to pray for us. Is there any harm in this? Was it wrong for St. Paul to ask the prayers of his disciples, and, if not, how can it be wrong for us to ask the prayers of the saints reigning with God in glory? It is on this principle of invocation and intercession that we act in

daily life. Witness persons wanting government appointments asking the influence of respected friends of the government.

It is of her the inspired writer spoke when he exclaimed: "Who is she that cometh forth like the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible like an army in battle array!" (Canticles vi. 9). St. John in the Apocalypse (xii. 1) describes her as "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars."

Even Protestant poets, inspired by faith as well as poetic genius, paid her the highest tributes of reverence and honor. Thus Wordsworth sings:

"Woman whose virgin bosom was uncrost
By the least shade of thought to sin allied,
Woman above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast,
Purer than foam on central ocean tost,
Fairer than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast,
Thy image falls to earth, yet some I ween
The suppliant knees might bend
As to a visible power in which doth blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in thee;
Of mother's love with maiden purity
Of high with love, celestial with terrene."

AS TO THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

But the priests say they can forgive sins, and they charge money for doing so. That priests can forgive sins on certain conditions is true, but that they charge money for doing so is a wicked falsehood. Christ could forgive sins, and He gave the same God-like power to His Church for all time when He said to His Apostles: "As the Father hath sent Me I send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained" (John xx. 22, 23). Now, what are the conditions on which the priests of the Church are empowered to absolve from sin? The conditions on the part of the penitent are contrition, confession, and satisfaction; that is to say, the penitent must be truly and really sorry for his sins, because they offend God, and must be firmly resolved not to sin again. He must confess all his grievous sins to the priest and lay before him his naked heart, must confess to the priest his sins of thought, his sins

of act, his sins of omission. The penitent must in addition perform the works of penance prescribed by the confessor in satisfaction for his sins. He must also repair injury done his neighbor in goods or character. These, and these alone, are ordinarily the conditions on which actual grievous sin can be forgiven in the Catholic Church. Is this an easy process? Is this ordeal calculated to encourage the commission of sin, or is it not? It has proved to be an efficient deterrent from the commission of sin. How much easier is the Protestant doctrine and practice on this point. The Protestant says: "Believe in Christ and all grievous sins will be forgiven." An easy system, truly. It is indeed salvation made easy, and the narrow road to heaven broadened and made smooth.

CONCERNING INDULGENCES.

But is not your doctrine and practice of indulgences calculated to debase and corrupt? Your indulgences are not only a pardon for past sins but a permission to commit future sins, and all this for a pecuniary consideration. This is a wicked Protestant misrepresentation and calumny.

An indulgence is not a pardon for sin or a permission to commit it. An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment due for sin after the guilt and the eternal punishment due for it have been forgiven. We have several proofs in Holy Writ that after the guilt of sin has been forgiven there still remains due for it a temporal punishment. Thus Adam was forgiven the guilt of his sin, and yet what fearful temporal punishment had to be endured by him for it. He was banished from Paradise and was condemned to death. Famines, pestilence, wars, sickness and death, and numberless other temporal chastisements have followed on the original sin of Adam. David was forgiven his double sin of adultery and murder. And yet he was punished for it by the death of his child. Moses was forgiven his sin of doubt; yet as a temporal punishment of it he was not allowed to enter the land of promise. It is therefore certain that a temporal punishment remains due for sin after the guilt of it has been forgiven. Now the Church, by virtue of the power of loosing and binding, left to her by Christ, can remit this temporal punishment on certain prescribed conditions—such as the worthy reception of the sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist, the recitation of certain prayers, acts of mortification, alms, deeds, and other works of mercy. There is nothing in all this to show that

an indulgence is the pardon of sin or permission to commit. This is, of course, another Protestant misrepresentation, another false accusation against God's Church. On the contrary, the Catholic doctrine of indulgences shows the enormity and heinousness of sin; it illustrates the infinite merits and efficacy of Christ's atonement, and shows forth the tender mercy and goodness of God and the mutual union and charity that bind the members of the Church in one great brotherhood.

In the Catholic theory an indulgence is not so indulgent a thing after all, and is not at all so easy as the simple plenary indulgence given by Protestantism, which has abolished fasting and abstinence, done away with self-denial and mortification, which has a horror of confession, and has stigmatized all penitential works as not only useless but derogatory to the merits of Christ's atonement. Thus Protestantism is a vast plenary indulgence which has sought to make broad and smooth the narrow road that alone, by Christ's appointment, leads to eternal life. The Protestant broad way is not the narrow way of Christ.

HER DOCTRINES—THE TEST OF TRUTH.

Time will not allow me to refer to the popular misrepresentations that prevail of other teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. In the points touched on we have shown how utterly false are the misrepresentations that are held as unquestionably true without knowledge or examination of the truth. We have shown that on these points the doctrines of the Church are in harmony with right reason, and are sanctioned and upheld by God's revealed Word; and on proper examination all her other teachings would be found to stand the same test of truth. The Church could not teach error, because she is the pillar and ground of truth and the oracle of the Holy Ghost in the world. God created the sun to light and warm the material creation, and since it was first launched into space it has never failed in its office and never shall until the end of the world. God instituted His Church as the sun of the moral world, and by His appointment it will continue to enlighten human intelligence, to warm into religious life human hearts until the consummation of time.

The Council of Trent on the Seven Sacraments

THE Catholic doctrine respecting the Sacraments in general is thus laid down by the Council of Trent in its seventh session, March 3d, 1547:

CANON I.—If any one saith that the Sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ, Our Lord; or that they are more or less than seven, to wit: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony, or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a Sacrament, let him be anathema.

CANON II.—If any one saith that these said Sacraments of the New Law do not differ from the Sacraments of the Old Law, save that the ceremonies are different, and different the outward rites, let him be anathema.

CANON III.—If any one saith that these seven Sacraments are in such wise equal to each other, as that one is not in any way more worthy than another, let him be anathema.

CANON IV.—If any one saith that the Sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, but superfluous; and that without them, or without the desire thereof, men obtain of God, through faith alone, the grace of justification; though all (the Sacraments) are not indeed necessary for every individual, let him be anathema.

CANON V.—If any one saith that these Sacraments were instituted for the sake of nourishing faith alone, let him be anathema.

CANON VI.—If any one saith that the Sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify; or that they do not confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto; as though they were merely outward signs of grace or justice received through faith, and certain marks of the Christian profession, whereby believers are distinguished among men from unbelieving, let him be anathema.

CANON VII.—If any one saith that grace, as far as God's part is concerned, is not given through the said Sacraments always, and to all men, even though they receive them rightly, but (only) sometimes, and to some persons, let him be anathema.

CANON VIII.—If any one saith that by the said Sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for the obtaining of grace, let him be anathema.

CANON IX.—If any man saith that in the three Sacraments (to wit) Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, there is not imprinted in the soul a character, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible sign, on account of which they cannot be repeated, let him be anathema.

CANON X.—If any one saith that all Christians have power to administer the word and all the Sacraments, let him be anathema.

CANON XI.—If any one saith that in ministers, when they effect and confer the Sacraments, there is not required the intention at least of doing what the Church does, let him be anathema.

CANON XII.—If any one saith that a minister being in mortal sin, if so be that he observe all the essentials which belong to the effecting or conferring of the Sacrament, neither affects nor confers the Sacrament, let him be anathema.

CANON XIII.—If any one saith that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, wont to be used in the solemn administration of the Sacraments, may be condemned, or without sin be omitted at pleasure by the ministers, or be changed by every pastor of the churches into other new ones, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA.—*From "Sacraments and Sacramentals," by Rev. S. B. Smith, D.D., author of "Canon Law."*

THE

SEVEN SACRAMENTS

ILLUSTRATED

THE Sacraments are the channels instituted by Jesus Christ, by which the saving graces are to be imparted to the soul. To the hierarchy and priesthood of the New Law the graces of state and an indelible character, with the right of duly administering the Sacraments, are imparted by the Sacrament of Holy Orders. By Baptism man is delivered from the bondage of Satan and original sin, cleansed white in the blood of the Lamb; he receives the indelible character of a Christian, and is enrolled as a citizen of the kingdom. He is confirmed indelibly in this character, and made a soldier of Christ by Confirmation, receiving a fullness of grace from the Holy Ghost; if he falters in his allegiance, if he offends and transgresses, the Precious Blood, on his contrite return, will wash away his defilement in the Sacrament of Penance; while, in the Holy Eucharist, Jesus Christ gives Himself as a food to the faithful soul—a food necessary to attain eternal life. He sanctified marriage, and through it the family, by blessing with His first miracle the wedding at Cana; but He made Matrimony a Sacrament by elevating it to be an image of His union with the Church; and through it He pours grace to make its recipients holy as instruments in adding fresh citizens to His kingdom. Then, as the mortal career closes, Extreme Unction, that last unction of the Holy Spirit, soothes the sufferer in that last struggle which all must meet, but which no familiarity can rob of its terrors. Christ, in the deep love which overflowed from His Sacred Heart, by an invention of affection, gave this Sacrament with its grace for that fearful hour when human aid and human help avail not, and man feels unutterably alone."—*Rev. S. B. Smith, D.D., Author of "Canon Law."*

BAPTISM

OUR LORD AND THE APOSTLES

GOING therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—*St. Matthew xxviii. 19.*

Now it came to pass when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heavens were opened:

And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape as a dove upon Him: and a voice came from heaven: Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.—*St. Luke iii. 21, 22.*

WORDS OF ST. CLEMENT AND OTHERS

"Baptism should be administered in the Church: to administer it in private houses, without urgent necessity, would be a great sin; such necessity is either the imminent death of the infant, or infamy and scandal that would attach to the mother if the child were taken to a public church. But the children of kings and princes have the privilege of being baptized at home."—*St. Clement, de Baptismo.*

Baptism is a sacrament necessary for all, without which no one can enter the Kingdom of God, for Jesus Christ has said: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (St. John iii. 5).

"Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, came to wash away the defilement from our souls, and to restore us to that divine friendship which we had lost by the sin of Adam. He is the second Adam, who came to repair the iniquity of the first. It was our Saviour's privilege to prescribe the conditions on which our reconciliation with God was to be effected."—*James Cardinal Gibbons.*

"Baptism is the first and most necessary of the Sacraments, and the gate, as it were, by which we must enter into the Church of Jesus Christ. This Sacrament is also called the Sacrament of Regeneration, because in its reception man is subject to a second birth, and receives a new life, the life of the children of God."

"We have, my brethren, contracted in Holy Baptism the obligation of believing and practising the doctrine of Jesus Christ as taught in the true Church. That we may faithfully fulfil this great duty, let us often renew our baptismal promises, saying: 'I renounce Satan, his works, and all his pomps; and I ally myself to Jesus Christ forever.' "—*Rev. F. X. Schouppe, S.J.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS—BAPTISM

CONFIRMATION

THE HOLY APOSTLES

THE first recorded instance of Confirmation is where St. Peter and St. John confirmed the Samaritans who had been already baptized by St. Philip. "Who when they were come prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. . . . Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."—*Acts viii. 15, 17.*

WORDS FROM THE SAINTS

"The time to receive Confirmation is from about seven years to any older age. All must make haste to be confirmed by a bishop: that is, to receive the sevenfold grace of the Holy Ghost."—*St. Clement, Epistolam ad Julium.*

"Do you know that it is the practice of the churches that the imposition of hands should be performed over baptized persons, and the Holy Ghost thus invoked? Do you ask where it is written? In the Acts of the Apostles; but were there no scriptural authority at hand, the consent of the whole world in this regard would have the force of law."—*St. Jerome.*

"He who receives this Sacrament should know the mysteries of the holy faith, and should be in the state of grace; otherwise he is guilty of sacrilege. Hence the person who is to be confirmed would do well to go to Confession and Communion before he receives Confirmation. All Christians are bound, under grievous sin, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation; if, when they have the opportunity, they refuse or neglect to be confirmed, they become guilty of mortal sin."—*St. Alphonsus Liguori.*

WORDS OF A JESUIT FATHER

"Confirmation is placed second in the order of the Sacraments, because in the early ages of the Church it was conferred immediately after Baptism, of which it was the complement. Baptism gives spiritual life, Confirmation strengthens it; Baptism brings forth children of God, Confirmation causes them to grow, changing them into strong men and soldiers of Jesus Christ."

"Let us take care, my brethren, to preserve, to co-operate with, the graces of our Confirmation; let us be resolute Christians, let us trample under foot human respect, let us proudly confess our faith as did the multitude of martyrs; let us fulfil with fidelity and constancy the most arduous duties of a Christian. Courage and confidence! God is our strength."—*Rev. F. X. Schouppe. S.J.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS—CONFIRMATION.

HOLY EUCHARIST

OUR LORD AND THE APOSTLES

OUR SAVIOUR said: "My flesh is meat indeed; and my blood is drink indeed" (St. John vi. 56). And when He instituted this Sacrament He said: "This is my body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me. This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you" (St. Luke xxii. 19, 20).

WORDS FROM THE SAINTS AND OTHERS

"They abstain from the Eucharist and prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ."—*St. Ignatius.*

"We do not receive these things as common bread and drink; but as Jesus Christ our Saviour was made flesh by the word of God, even so we have been taught that the Eucharist is both the flesh and the blood of the same incarnate Jesus."—*St. Justin Martyr.*

"If thou wilt go up with Christ to celebrate the Passover, He will give to thee that bread of benediction, His own body, and will vouchsafe to thee His own blood."—*St. Origen.*

"He Himself having declared, 'This is My body,' who shall dare to doubt henceforward? And He having said, 'This is My blood,' who shall ever doubt, saying: This is not His blood?"—*St. Cyril.*

"If thou wert indeed incorporeal, He would have delivered to thee those same incorporeal gifts without covering. But since the soul is united to the body, He delivers to thee in things perceptible to the senses the things to be apprehended by the understanding. How many nowadays say: 'Would that we could look upon His (Jesus') form, His figure, His raiment, His shoes.' "—*St. John Chrysostom.*

"The bread which you see on the altar, after being sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ. That chalice, after being sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ."—*St. Augustine.*

The Fathers of the Church, without an exception, re-echo the language of the Apostle of the Gentiles, by proclaiming the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist. I have counted the names of sixty-three Fathers and eminent ecclesiastical writers flourishing between the first and the sixth century, all of whom proclaim the Real Presence—some by explaining the mystery, others by thanking God for this inestimable gift, and others by exhorting the faithful to its worthy reception."—*James Cardinal Gibbons.*

"Let us thank Our Lord Jesus Christ, my brethren, for the inestimable treasure He has bequeathed to us in the Holy Eucharist; let us ask Him to increase more and more our devotion toward that adorable mystery."—*Rev. F. X. Schouppe, S.J.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS—HOLY EUCHARIST.

PENANCE

Our Lord and the Apostles

PEACE be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.—*Words of Our Lord.*

But Peter saith to them: Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of JESUS CHRIST for the remission of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—*Acts ii. 38.*

Words from the Saints and Others

"To cleanse the leprosy of the body, or rather to pronounce it cleansed, was given to the Jewish priests alone. But to our priests is granted the power, not of declaring healed the leprosy of the body, but of absolutely cleansing the defilements of the soul. . . .

"If a sinner, as becomes him, would use the aid of his conscience, and hasten to confess his crimes, and disclose his ulcer to his physician who may heal and not reproach, and receive remedies from him; if he would speak to him alone, without the knowledge of any one, and with care lay all before him, easily would he amend his failings; for the confession of sins is the absolution of crimes."—*St. Chrysostom.*

"If the serpent, the devil, secretly bite a man, and thus infect him with the poison of sin, and this man shall remain silent, and do not penance, nor be willing to make known his wound to his brother and master; the master, who has a tongue that can heal, cannot easily serve him."—*St. Jerome.*

"With us, the bishop or priest binds or looses; not them who are merely innocent or guilty, but having heard, as his duty requires, the various qualities of sin, he understands who should be bound and who loosed."—*Idem.*

"Could the Catholic doctrine regarding the power of the priests and the obligation of confession be expressed in stronger language than this?"—*James Cardinal Gibbons.*

"Almighty God certainly can, if it so pleases Him, depute a man to forgive sins in His name. That He did depute certain men to forgive sins is plain from what our blessed Lord said to His Apostles and in the persons of the Apostles to their legitimate successors to the end of the world."—*Very Rev. Joseph Faà di Bruno, D.D.*

"We say that repentance, contrition, is, as it were, the soul of the Sacrament of Penance, because it avails us nothing to confess our sins if we are not truly penitent. When, therefore, my brethren, you go to confession, ask always of God the grace to have true sorrow for your sins, a firm purpose never again to commit them, and to avoid the occasion of them.—*Rev. F. X. Schouppe, S.J.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS—PENANCE.

EXTREME UNCTION

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

IS any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.—*St. James v. 14, 15.*

The Sacrament of Extreme Unction consists in the anointing, with holy oil, by the Priest, of those in danger of death by sickness, accompanied with a special prayer. It is called Extreme, because administered to sick persons when thought to be near the close of life.

It is a true Sacrament, because it possesses all the requisites for a Sacrament. 1st, It has the outward sign, which consists in the anointing with a little oil the seat of the senses, as the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the lips, the hands, and the feet, accompanied by special prayers. 2d, It has the promise of grace.

The Words of Holy Saints and Pontiffs

"Not only when they (the priests) regenerate us, but they have also power to forgive sins committed afterward; for he says: 'Is any man sick among you; let him call in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.'"—*St. Chrysostom.*

Pope Innocent I. in a letter to a bishop named Decentius, after quoting the words of St. James, proceeds: "These words, there is no doubt, ought to be understood of the faithful who are sick, who can be anointed with the holy oil, which, having been prepared by a bishop, may be used not only for priests, but for all Christians."

"The custom of the Church requires that the sick be anointed by the priests with consecrated oil and be sanctified by the prayer which accompanies it."—*Venerable Bede of England.*

The Advice of a Jesuit Father

"As regards us, my brethren, knowing the beneficial results of the last Sacraments, let us be watchful in procuring them for our sick friends and neighbors; and when we ourselves are sick, let us not hesitate to demand them; inasmuch as, received in time, they restore bodily health."—*Rev. F. X. Schouppe, S.J.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS—EXTREME UNCTION.

HOLY ORDERS

SCRIPTURAL ADMONITION

NEGLECT not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with imposition of the hands of the priesthood.—*I. St. Timothy iv. 14.*

I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands.—*II. St. Timothy i. 6.*

For carrying on divine worship, for governing the Church, and administering the Sacraments, a Priesthood is required, and God alone can institute a Priesthood.

"In the Old Law, God chose and raised to the Priesthood Aaron, his children and their descendants, and they were to be assisted in their priestly functions by the members of the tribe of Levi; and thus the Priesthood was transmitted to posterity simply by family descent. In the New Law the means instituted by Christ for the transmission of the priesthood was not limited to one family or tribe, but by having the Sacrament of Holy Order conferred on those Christians whom the Apostles and their successors might choose among the baptized to be ordained."—*Very Rev. Joseph Faà di Bruno, D.D.*

Words of St. Chrysostom

"Purer than any solar ray should that hand be which divides that flesh, that mouth which is filled with spiritual fire, that tongue which is purpled with that most awful blood."—*St. Chrysostom.*

Words of Cardinal Gibbons

"As far as heaven is above earth, as eternity is above time, and the soul is above the body, so far are the prerogatives vested in God's ministers higher than those of any earthly potentate. An earthly prince can cast into prison or release therefrom. But his power is over the body. He cannot penetrate into the sanctuary of the soul. But the minister of God can release the soul from the prison of sin, and restore it to the liberty of a child of God."—*James Cardinal Gibbons.*

EXHORTATION

"Let us appreciate, my brethren, the sublime power which Jesus Christ has bestowed on the ministers of the Church; let us pray that they may worthily exercise their high functions; and let us always have the greatest respect and reverence for the august character with which they are invested."—*Rev. F. X. Schouppe, S.J.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS—HOLY ORDERS.

MARRIAGE

The Council of Trent

CHRIST Himself, the Institutor and Perfector of the venerable Sacraments, merited for us by His Passion the grace which might perfect that natural love, and confirm that indissoluble union, and sanctify the married; as the Apostle Paul intimates, saying: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself for it;" adding shortly after: "This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Ephes. v. 32). Whereas therefore matrimony, in the evangelical law, excels in grace, through Christ, the ancient marriages; with reason have our holy Fathers and Councils and the tradition of the universal Church always taught that it is to be numbered among the Sacraments of the New Law.—*Session xxiv.*

Eloquent Words of Cardinal Gibbons

Matrimony is not only a natural contract between husband and wife, but it has been elevated for Christians, by Jesus Christ, to the dignity of a sacrament: "Husbands," says the Apostle, "love your wives. As Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it, . . . so also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall adhere to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Ephes. v. 25–32).

In these words the Apostle declares that the union of Christ with His Church is the type or model of the bond subsisting between man and wife. Now the union between Christ and His Church is supernatural and sealed by divine grace. Hence, also, is the fellowship of a Christian husband and wife cemented by the grace of God. The wedded couple are bound to love one another during their whole lives, as Christ has loved His Church, and to discharge the virtues proper to the marriage state. In order to fulfil these duties, special graces of our Saviour are required. . . .

Christian wives and mothers, what gratitude you owe to the Catholic Church for the honorable position you now hold in society! If you are no longer regarded as the slave, but the equal of your husband; if you are no longer the toy of his caprice, and liable to be discarded at any moment, like the women of Turkey and the Mormon wives of Utah; but if you are recognized as the mistress and queen of your household, you owe your emancipation to the Church. You are especially indebted for your liberty to the Popes who rose up in all the majesty of their spiritual power to vindicate the rights of injured wives against the lustful tyranny of their husbands.—*James Cardinal Gibbons.*

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS MATRIMONY.

AN ANGELICAN TEACHING LITTLE CHILDREN.

An Angelical Teaching

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WHOSOEVER, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.—*St. Matthew v. 19.*

Angelicals: An order of nuns, following the rule of St. Augustine, founded by Luigia di Torelli, Countess of Guastalla, about 1530. She had been married twice, but, being left a second time a widow when only twenty-five years of age, she resolved to devote the rest of her life and her large fortune to the divine service.

She founded her first convent at Milan. Her religious took the name of Angelicals, in order to remind themselves whenever they uttered it, of the purity of the angels. Every nun adopted the name of "Angelica," prefixing it to that of a patron saint and her family name—*e.g.*, "Angelica Maria Anna di Gonzaga." Their constitutions were drawn up by St. Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan. —*Catholic Dictionary.*

EJACULATION

In thy conception, O Virgin Mary, thou wast immaculate. Pray for us to the Father, whose Son Jesus, conceived in thy womb, by the Holy Ghost, thou didst bring forth.

Blessed be the holy and immaculate conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VI., by a rescript of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, November 21st, 1793, granted to all the faithful, every time they shall say, with at least contrite heart and devotion, either of the ejaculatory prayers given above:

AN INDULGENCE OF ONE HUNDRED DAYS.—*Raccolta, p. 208.*

True Knowledge the Bulwark of Faith

The Duty to Know and Teach Catholic Truth

The beauty of truth, the refining and elevating influences of knowledge, are meant for all, and she wishes them to be brought within the reach of all. Knowledge enlarges our capacity both for self-improvement and for promoting the welfare of our fellow-men; and in so noble a work the Church wishes every hand to be busy. Knowledge, too, is the best weapon against pernicious errors. It is only "a little learning" that is "a dangerous thing." In days like ours, when error is so pretentious and aggressive, every one needs to be as completely armed as possible with sound knowledge; not only the clergy, but the people also, that they may be able to withstand the noxious influences of popularized irreligion. In the great coming combat between truth and error, between Faith and Agnosticism, an important part of the fray must be borne by the laity, and woe to them if they are not well prepared. And if, in the olden days of vassalage and serfdom, the Church honored every individual, no matter how humble his position, and labored to give him the enlightenment that would qualify him for future responsibilities, much more now, in the era of popular rights and liberties, when every individual is an active and influential factor in the body politic, does she desire that all should be fitted by suitable training for an intelligent and conscientious discharge of the important duties that will devolve upon them.—*THIRD PLENARY COUNCIL.*

A COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT OF

ALL THE TRUTHS OF HOLY RELIGION

BY

MONSEIGNEUR DE SÉGUR

ON THE NATURE OF RELIGION.

THERE are many people in the world who never wish to hear religion mentioned; the very name of it excites their anger; they speak of it with a scorn and a contempt that are truly extraordinary! Have they a knowledge of it? Have they studied it? Have they discovered in it something that others have not perceived? No. They are, as a rule, men of very superficial education, who have forgotten, many years since, the little Christianity that was taught them in their childhood, in whom age has developed their evil passions, and who have become more and more the enemies of religion, as they have more and more indulged in sinful habits, in bad companionships and associations.

What is there in religion that can thus excite their opposition? For my part (and I have well investigated it), I can discover nothing that is not good, great, beautiful, and consoling; nothing that is not worthy of God, worthy of an upright, reasonable man.

But what is religion?

It is the knowledge, the love, and the service of God. It is the sacred bond by which we are united to our Creator and our Father. It is the great science which teaches to all, to the rich as well as to

the poor, to children, and to men both young and old, to the learned and to the ignorant, what they are, whence they came, whither they are going, what the destiny that awaits them when this life is ended; the course they must pursue to be good and happy, the evil they must avoid if they would escape misery and punishment. It is but the science and the practice of duty. What is there in this deserving of condemnation and invective?

Religion is designed for nothing but good; she cares for, comforts, and even prevents, as far as is possible, all human misery. She is the protectress of infancy. It is she who, in her holy compassion for the weakness of childhood, has everywhere erected asylums for forsaken children, for sick children, for convalescent children, for orphans; it is she who has endowed homes for apprentices and workmen. It is she who has founded refuges, hospitals, and has raised up innumerable religious communities, and inspired men and women to care for the unfortunate, the sick, and the prisoners, and for those infected by disease; to receive weary, wandering travellers, and to help erring women to turn from sin.

It is religion which has civilized modern society. From what did all our grand ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity, and love for the poor originally spring, if not from the Christian religion, which the ungrateful reject to their own great loss?

"What would become of the world without religion?" said Napoleon, on the rock of St. Helena; "the greatest service that I have rendered to France has been to re-establish the Catholic religion."

Where shall we find that craving for equality, which is the torment of modern society, fully and legitimately satisfied if not in religion? Behold, in our churches, side by side, the rich and the poor, master and servant, the faithful Christian and the repentant sinner; beneath the pulpit, at the font, in the confessional, at the altar, there is one rule for all. Is not this a true equality, free from all dissension? By its power everything is elevated and ennobled, nothing is debased or overthrown.

Religion is the friend of man; it guards him and blesses him in childhood, in age, and in death. . . . It delivers him holy and rejoicing into the bosom of his God, who has rendered him good, holy, and happy during his earthly probation; and who will reward him for his fidelity throughout eternity.

Let us then love and reverence this holy Christian faith; let us both learn and practise what it teaches. The more we know of re-

ligion the better we shall love it; the more we love it, the better we shall practise it.

Vice, evil passions, pride, and ignorance are the only enemies of religion. When we are acting rightly we are drawn toward it, as soon as we desire to do evil we begin to turn from it.

It is consequently good, because evil alone is at enmity with it. It is good, because all who practise it sincerely become good and holy from its influence. It is good because its effects are ever salutary and beneficial.

Religious ignorance and indifference is the bane of the present century, one of the deepest wounds of modern society, but a wound which is, thank God, healing day by day.

DEATH.

Is death the end of all things?

There are men who will not hesitate to answer this question with an unblushing affirmative. To their minds the only difference between themselves, their dog, and their cat, consists in color, skin, and the manner of walking.

Now, much as we admire humility, we must confess that we have certainly more pride than such persons as these, since we assert that there exists between animals and men a far more fundamental difference.

Then, in what does this difference lie?

In the fact that man has a soul, endowed with power to reflect, to desire, to love, and to act freely; a soul created by God in His own image, and which is, for this reason, immortal.

A spirit is a being that we cannot see with our eyes, nor hear with our ears, nor touch with our hands; a being, in one word, which cannot be apprehended by the material senses of the body, but can only be known to us by the aid of our reason.

Our soul is a being such as this, it is a pure spirit united to our body which is material. The body is that coarse and material part of ourselves which must die, but the soul, the spiritual and essential part, is not subject to death. At the very moment that it quits the body, just as one casts aside a garment, the soul appears before God; if it has been holy and faithful, and has loved and served God, it will then receive His blessing, and will be ultimately admitted into eternal bliss; if, on the contrary, it has been sinful and unfaithful, and has neglected the service of God. and those duties which it

was bound to fulfil, it is cursed and condemned for ever, and is eternally punished in hell.

Of all God's creatures none but men and angels have been endowed with an immortal spirit.

An angel is a pure spirit, not united to a body. Man is a soul clothed with a body—a spirit united to a body. An animal is a body without a reasonable, free, immortal soul.

Therefore to say, "When I am dead, all will be dead," is not only to assert what is false, but it is to say, moreover, "I am nothing but an animal void of understanding, like my horse or my dog. I am even inferior to many animals, for my dog sees farther, runs more swiftly, and has fewer necessities than I; my cat can see in the dark, can climb where I could not, has no need of many things that are the common requirements of life to me; my canary is free rom grief, from care, from anxiety; it is always contented, always singing—I am therefore the least enviable, the most pitiable of animals."

Speak thus if it gives you pleasure, believe it if you can, but for ourselves, as our very least pretension, we claim that we are men.

Materialists, who declare that there is no God and no soul, reason falsely, and make an unfounded and incredible assertion which no man ever has been, or ever will be, able to prove. They lie to their own conscience, and feel an inward conviction that it is not as they say. This is so true that at the awful moment of death, when all delusions vanish, and when man is placed between that life which is fast slipping from his grasp, and that eternity in which he is so soon to be engulfed, he sees for the first time clearly that truth by which he must be judged. Then all things appear to him in a different light; then he will invariably cry for mercy, ask pardon of God, call in the priest, confess his sins, and entreat those who surround him not to live as he has lived or follow his example.

This is because men are not guided by reason, but by passion or prejudice, when they reject religion, and deny the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. Evil influences working within bring confusion to the mind, making them argue falsely as though possessed by a species of frenzy. Let us then live as reasonable beings destined for an immortal life, in which we shall see God, and possess Him into all eternity. Let us prepare ourselves for our great destiny by a pure, holy, Christian life. Let us learn to sacrifice pleasure to duty, to fulfil all righteousness, and to be ever prepared

to appear before God. Thus alone can we be good and happy on earth, perfect and happy in our everlasting home.

THE SOUL AND THE BODY.

We all have a body composed of flesh and bones, and, judging only by outward appearances, we are but animals of a higher order than dogs and cats. Animals have indeed a body of which the organism is almost similar to ours, eyes which see like our eyes, ears which hear all that we hear; in one word, organs by means of which their bodies live and act precisely as our own. Are we then animals? Alas! if we only judged by appearances and the lives of many, we should be tempted to answer, Yes!

In truth, what difference is there between a beast and the man who thinks, lives, loves like a beast, caring only for eating, and drinking, and sleeping?

With you, dear reader, I know it is not thus, and you have doubtless often reflected on that other part of yourself which we call the soul, and which makes the distinction between the man and the brute. When you think, it is your soul which thinks within you; when you desire anything, it is your soul that desires it. The soul is a spirit created in the image of God, and therefore able to recognize the truth, to love the right, and to act freely Your soul is of a far more perfect nature than your body. It is to your soul that God communicates Himself, when He comes to you, enlightening you with the twofold light of reason and of faith, and filling your heart with His grace in order to gain your love. It is not your body, but your soul, which is good or wicked according as it inclines toward good or evil, according as it separates itself from Jesus Christ by sin or unites itself to Him by obedience and love. Your body alone is not capable of being either good or wicked. Yet these two, body and soul, are closely united, united in such a manner that we are men only by reason of this union. What is our life indeed but the union of our body and our soul? My soul is the living and invisible inmate of this visible dwelling-place which I call my body; it is my soul which animates my body; which thinks through my brain, which loves through my heart, which hears, sees, speaks, acts, and suffers through my organs and my senses.

But the soul has a life which springs from its free and voluntary union with God, and all the strength it possesses to do good comes from this divine source. It can die, that is to say, it can separate

itself from God by sin; and then it imitates the devil, and takes part in his rebellion, and if it persevere in this rebellion, at the very moment that it leaves this world it will be eternally condemned and cast into hell.

Religion, then, teaches us to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him, teaches us also how our soul may have life; it teaches us to be truly men, and to prepare ourselves in this world to live with the holy angels an eternal and beatific life in heaven.

Religion is also the most important and necessary of all sciences; it is our guide in the journey of life; and the man who refuses to listen to its voice, and rejects its guidance, is under a fatal delusion. Such reflections are more necessary now than in past ages. How many men there are who seem ignorant even of the existence of their soul! And how many live as though they were thus ignorant! Their only anxiety is to gain money to minister to their bodily wants and appetites; when they have eaten, drunk, and slept well, when they have comfortable houses, good clothes, and assured employment, they seem to think that they have perfectly accomplished their destiny; and their soul, and eternity, and God are utterly forgotten.

Are you created in the image of God? Are you Christian men?

Do not imitate the folly of the men of whom I speak. Listen to the voice of religion, which brings to you true life, and peace, and happiness in this world. By the aid of religion we may bear with patience those earthly troubles which are both the trial of our fidelity and the expiation of our sins. There would be no real misery on earth if every man studied the life of his soul as carefully as he studies the life of his body. The world would become a terrestrial paradise, and the greater part of the evils which afflict us would rapidly disappear.

RELIGION.

God has placed us in this world to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him, and, by this means, to attain to the eternal happiness of heaven.

This is our last end, that is to say, the object for which we were created.

God, when designing us for this excellent end, gave to us all one method of attaining it. This method is Religion; for religion is that Revelation which our Heavenly Father has deigned to make of all that we must believe, perform, practise, and avoid, if we desire to

do His will on earth, and to merit by our fidelity an eternal happiness in heaven.

There is only one true religion. Only one which transmits to us, unaltered, the divine revelations: this is the Christian or Catholic religion.

We must therefore believe all it teaches, and practise all it commands, if we would not rebel against God Himself. Other religions which have prevailed and do still prevail upon earth (Idolatry, Mahometanism, Judaism, Protestantism, etc.) are sacrilegious and lying imitations of the true religion, just as false coinage is a guilty and lying imitation of the real. The Catholic religion alone can furnish solid evidences of its truth. It is called Christian from the name of Jesus Christ, its divine founder; we call it also Catholic, which means Universal, because Jesus Christ delivered it to all men and for all ages. It commenced with the creation of the world, and will endure as long as the world endures, and unto all eternity.

On earth God has caused it to pass through three developments, which may be likened to three successive ages. Religion resembles man who passes through the three ages of infancy, youth, and maturity, being throughout these changes still one and the same individual. In the same way the true religion is one, although it has developed itself by three distinct and successive revelations.

The first revelation, the first teaching that God gave to the world, was given to Adam and to the Patriarchs (Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.), and endured until Moses: we call it the patriarchal religion; and it lasted for about 2,500 years. The second revelation was the development of the first, and was made by the Lord to Moses and to the other prophets (David, Solomon, Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel, Ezechiel, etc.); it endured until the coming of the Saviour of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ, about 1,500 years: we call it the Jewish religion.

The third and last revelation given by God, which is the Catholic or Christian religion, developed and completed the two former; it was made by the Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ, who appeared in the world about 1,900 years ago, whose reign shall have no end.

Jesus Christ, God made man, is the Head of all religion. Just as the sun at noontide irradiates all space, that which he has already traversed, that which he occupies, and that which he has to traverse still, vivifying all things by his beneficent light, so Jesus Christ, the eternal King of souls, Redeemer and Saviour of the world, irradiates with His divine influence the past, the present, and the future.

He it is who was regarded from afar by the holy patriarchs, the prophets, and the faithful of former times; it is He whom they have looked for; it is He whom they have loved; it is in Him they have believed and hoped, and by whom they have been saved. It is He whom the Apostles and the elect of His own time believed, adored, and loved. It is on Him that the eyes of all future generations must be fixed, even to the end of the ages, when they shall all be judged by Him.

This divine Master, after having given to men the third revelation, after having taught them all that it is good for them to know in this life concerning religion, urged His love to the extreme limits of a death upon the cross to expiate our sins, and satisfy the justice of His Father; He has purified us by His blood, and has opened to us the gate of heaven, which sin had closed against us. Risen, glorious, and triumphant, He ascended to His Father; and there He awaits in eternal glory all His true disciples, even those who believe in His word, who imitate His example, and who employ those means of salvation which He instituted before He left the earth.

Further, we shall see how, to preserve His holy religion pure and intact and to spread it throughout the whole earth, Jesus Christ instituted a Church, namely, a body of pastors, spiritual leaders of men, guardians of His doctrine, trustees of His authority. We shall see that the Supreme Head of these pastors, and consequently of all the disciples of Jesus Christ, is the Pope, Bishop of Rome, successor of the Apostle St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles; and that thus the Christian religion is that which is taught by the Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

This divine religion will endure as long as the world endures, without any change in its doctrine, beyond the fear of any alteration through the creeping in of error. It is the work of God; He who made it watches over it; Jesus Christ protects it by His Almighty power. After the final judgment the Christian religion will not end. In heaven it shall attain to an absolute perfection, and shall endure throughout all ages. All its members shall be saints, worthy of Jesus Christ their divine Head, who shall admit them to a participation in His transcendent glory and divine beatitude. And thus humanity, which came out from God, and has been separated from Him by sin, shall be, through the Christian religion, reconciled to God, and shall have its home in Him for all eternity.

The Christian religion is the true light, and the true happiness of man in this world and the next. It contains all that is grand,

simple, good, and worthy of God and man. Happy he who knows this holy religion; but far happier he who practises it, and makes it the rule of his life; he accomplishes the will of God; he walks in the narrow way; he knows his Creator, serves, and loves Him, and after the trials of this life shall reap a glorious reward! . . .

A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THERE are many people, otherwise good and upright, who live without religion, and resemble pagans in the midst of Christian society; because they have no real knowledge of religion. Having no knowledge of it, or only a very superficial knowledge, they do not appreciate it; having no appreciation of it, they cannot love it; having no love for it, they do not dream of practising it. There is often a very false idea of religion in the world, and it is in accordance with this idea that it is judged, condemned, and criticised. This is a deplorably thoughtless age, and it is with the intention that you may avoid this common failing that I desire to explain to you briefly this holy and glorious Christian faith.

Religion is that bond by which God is united to His creature, and the creature to his God. Religion is that sacred and necessary science which teaches us what God is, what He has done for us; what we are, what we must do for God; what life is, and what awaits us when life is ended.

There is one true religion, because there is one true God.

There is only one, because there is only one true God; and to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him constitutes religion; and this one true religion is the Christian or Catholic religion, in which you and I have had the happiness to be born. It is called Christian, because the divine centre of all its mysteries is Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man; Catholic, which means Universal, because it embraces all times, all people, and all places.

Religion, considered as a whole, may be classed under three great divisions: The first contains the truths that we must believe, because God has revealed them to us; the second contains the duties that we must practise, shows forth virtue and vice, and is called Christian morality; the third contains those means of sanctification and salvation which God presents to us, treats of the sacraments, of prayer, and of Divine worship.

The first part of these instructions is addressed more especially to

the intellect; the second to the heart; and the third to the emotions: that is to say, to the soul in all its relations with the world around us.

An explanation of the Credo, or the Apostles' Creed, constitutes the first part; an explanation of the Commandments of God and the Church constitutes the second; an explanation of the Seven Sacraments, the Lord's Prayer or Angelic Salutation, and religious ceremonies constitute the third.

Let us then listen with attention, and reap as much advantage as we can.

I BELIEVE.

RELIGION, we have said, is the sacred bond by which God is united to us and we are united to God; and that as there is but one true God, so there is but one true religion, which is the Christian religion. We have added that its teaching may be divided into three parts, namely: 1. the truths that we must believe because God has revealed them to us; 2, the duties we must practise because God has imposed them upon us; 3, the means of sanctification and salvation that we must employ because God has offered them to us.

The truths that God proposes to us to be believed are contained and summed up in a kind of prayer or formula of faith called the Apostles' Creed.

The Apostles of Jesus Christ composed it at Jerusalem, before they dispersed to spread throughout the world the light of the Gospel.

Doubtless, you know, dear reader, this Apostles' Creed or Credo. Still, on the chance that you may have partly forgotten it, allow me to recite it with you:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."

Let us explain the first word: I believe, *Credo*. To believe is to admit anything upon the testimony of another. When an honest man speaks to us, we believe him, do we not, because we have con

fidence in his word? If we believe an honest man, how much more must we believe God, who has deigned to reveal Himself to us through patriarchs and prophets, and then by His only Son Jesus Christ, Founder of the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church, to which He entrusted the charge of religion, with the promise of His divine assistance even to the end of the world.

We accept the teaching of God, which the Church proposes through Faith. Without it we could have no knowledge of God, and it is the necessary foundation of the whole fabric of our religion.

Faith is that holy disposition of the soul which enables us to receive with docility the light of God and the teaching of His Church, and to receive it moreover from a supremely rational motive, because God is truth itself, and His Church guided by Him can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Faith teaches us mysteries, that is to say, truths which we can know but cannot understand. Nevertheless we are perfectly rational in believing these mysteries, because we know that the voice which teaches them is truth itself.

Just as a child is rational when he believes the word of the kind mother who directs his inexperience, even so we Christians are supremely rational when we listen with docility to the rightful pastors of the Church, sent by God to make known to us His laws, to teach us how we may truly serve Him and eternally save our souls.

Further we shall see how the only rightful pastors of the faithful are the Pope and the Catholic Bishops, successors of St. Peter and the Apostles.

Let us then stir up our faith, and utter with a greater earnestness and a still stronger conviction the great word which leads us to God: *Credo!*

Yes, I believe what our fathers believed, what the holy Apostles and the martyrs believed, and what so many great minds and learned men have since believed. I believe in this divine religion which has changed the face of the earth, which has civilized the world, which has constituted all modern societies, which is the sole support and safeguard of nations and of empires! I desire to live and to die in this holy faith, to find in it my consolation in all grief and trouble, to learn from it to be good and virtuous; and when breathing my last and about to appear before God, that my last thought and my supreme hope may be still an act of faith! *Credo!*

WHETHER WE MUST BELIEVE WHAT WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND.

Père Lacordaire was dining one day at a *table d'hôte* in a provincial town of France. Every one knows that Père Lacordaire was a celebrated preacher, a religious of the Order of Dominicans, and renowned for his great talent and brilliant intellect.

At a *table d'hôte* there is a great medley of guests—an indiscriminate gathering of young and old, dull and intelligent. The priest was taking his modest repast in silence; not far from him, a certain commercial traveller was dining and declaiming, well satisfied with himself, and entirely wanting in that proper reserve which is the effect of a good education. It was on Friday, a day of abstinence, and therefore a fertile occasion for commercial travellers dining at a *table d'hôte* to show openly that they are quite superior to what they term ancient prejudices.

After indulging in many witticisms against abstinence, bigotry, superstition, etc., this great talker, observing the unknown religious by a sidelong glance, grew impatient that his words appeared to produce so little effect upon him, and addressed him pointedly as he passed him a dish of omelets from which he had taken much more than his share. "For my part, monsieur," he said sneeringly, "I make it a rule not to believe what I cannot understand . . . is not that reasonable?" "Monsieur," answered Père Lacordaire politely, as he helped himself to the remnant of the omelet which his questioner had been willing to leave to him, "do you understand how it is that the fire which makes iron and lead soft has made these eggs hard?"

"Upon my word, I know nothing about it," answered the commercial traveller, puzzled by this singular question.

"Nor I," answered the religious, "but I see with pleasure that that does not prevent you from believing in omelets."

And yourself, reader, could you give me a solution of the problem proposed by Père Lacordaire? Could you tell me why the same fire produces upon iron and upon an egg precisely opposite effects? No, certainly not; and no man on earth, from the most humble of scullions to the most scholarly of savants, can explain it. Yet nevertheless, scholars and scullions, all the world believes in omelets.

Remember this witty repartee when you hear it said, in workshops or elsewhere, that it is not reasonable to believe in the mysteries of

religion because we should not believe what we cannot understand. Nothing is more feeble than this pretension made by ignorant people. Scientific men know by experience that it is necessary to be humble learners, and that there are in nature, as in religion, a crowd of mysteries, facts which it is impossible to doubt, yet which at the same time we cannot understand. We believe them without understanding them.

Have you ever reflected that, in all which concerns yourself, you are surrounded by mysteries which you cannot disbelieve, but which you cannot understand? Do you know how you hear me when I speak to you?

I move my tongue and my lips; I agitate by this a little air, which enters into your ear and strikes a skin which we call the tympanum, and then your mind grasps my thought.

Do you understand how that can be? No; but it is certain that you hear those who speak to you. Every time that you are spoken to a mystery presents itself, namely, an incomprehensible fact in which you thoroughly believe.

What is sight? You see me when I stand before you; can you understand why you see me, or explain why your eyes, which are two little balls, black and dark within, can make known to you what is passing around you, even to a considerable distance? That sight which you use from morning till evening, and in the reality of which you certainly believe, is a profound and an incomprehensible mystery.

I could go on multiplying examples, and bringing home to you the truth of that which I have just declared, namely, that the works of God are full of mysteries. It is most natural that religion should present to us mysteries to believe, since nature itself, which is more within our range, consists of mysteries.

And mark well that the most clever men are not, on this point, more advanced than we. They make very striking experiments, they establish facts better than we can, they know details of which we are ignorant; but of the cause, the wherefore, they know no more than we; the secret belongs to God.

What is heat? What is light? How does wheat grow? How do fruit and flowers spring forth? What is the sun? What are the stars?

God desires to recall to us incessantly, through the mysteries of nature and of religion, that our minds and our whole being depend upon Him, that He is greater than we, and that we must therefore submit ourselves humbly to His word and to His will. This submis

sion we call a reasonable faith. The man who refused to believe in the mysteries of nature would be a fool; the man who refuses to believe in the mysteries of faith is not only senseless but impious also. Let us be neither one nor the other. Let us believe with our whole heart in the teaching of God through His works, even though we do not always understand it. Let us rejoice that we can thus prove that we recognize Him gladly as our all-wise and all-wonderful Lord. He has Himself told us that there are three Persons in one God; that the second of these Persons, the Son of God, was made man under the name of Jesus Christ; that the Church is the messenger of Jesus Christ to save men; He has told us that there is an eternal heaven and an eternal hell. Let us then believe it as firmly as though we saw it with our eyes; and let us remember the words of Our Lord after His resurrection: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed!"

ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

FÉNÉLON, the great and good Archbishop of Cambray, whose name is honored even by the irreligious, was walking one evening with a child confided to his fatherly care.

The heavens glittered with a thousand stars. The horizon showed a faint gleam from the rays of the setting sun. All nature was at rest, beautiful and sublime. The child asking what hour it was, he drew out his watch." "What a beautiful watch, Monseigneur!" said his young pupil; "will you allow me to look at it?" The Archbishop gave it to him, and as the child examined it closely, "It is a very singular thing, my dear Louis," said Fénélon calmly, "that that watch made itself." "Made itself!" repeated the child, looking at his master with a smile. "Yes, entirely alone. A traveller found it in some desert, and it is quite certain that it made itself." "That is impossible!" young Louis answered; "Monseigneur is laughing at me?" "No, my child, I am not laughing at you. What is there impossible in what I have said?" "But, Monseigneur, a watch could never make itself!" "And why?" "Because so much precision is needed in the arrangement of the thousand little wheels which cause its motion and make the hands keep time that it requires great intelligence to organize it; and even then, very few men really succeed in spite of all their pains. That such a thing could make itself is absolutely impossible; I shall never believe it; you have been deceived, Monseigneur."

Fénélon embraced the child, and pointing out to him the starlit heavens above their heads, he asked: "What will you say then, my dear Louis, of those who pretend that all the wondrous heavens have not only made themselves, but preserve themselves in an unbroken order, and that there is no God?" "Are there truly men so foolish and so wicked as to say that?" asked Louis. "Yes, dear child, there are those who say it; few in number, thank God." "But are there any who believe it?" "I can scarcely credit that there are, considering how entirely they must do violence to their reason, their heart, their instinct, and their good sense, before they can maintain such an opinion. If it be evident that a watch cannot make itself, is it not far more evident of man himself, by whom watches are made? There was a first man, for all things have their beginnings, and this beginning is universally attested by the history of the human race. It is certain, then, that some one made the first man. This some one is that Being who made all beings, who has Himself been made by no one, and whom we call God. He is infinite, for there is no limit to His being; He is eternal, that is to say, infinite in duration, without beginning and without end; almighty, just, good, holy, perfect, and infinite in all His perfections. He is everywhere and invisible, and no one can fathom His marvels. It is in Him we live, and move, and have our being. He is our first principle and our last end; and true happiness, both in this world and the next, is to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him."

Such was the beautiful lesson that the illustrious Archbishop of Cambray gave to his little companion. He gives it to us also, and we may profit by it to remark once again on the foolishness of those miserable men who dare to doubt the existence of God.

The man who says there is no God is obliged in the same breath to say: "All men in all ages and in all countries have been wrong, and I alone am superior in intellect to all of them." In other words, "I have no common sense;" for common sense is nothing else but the common and universal sentiment of the whole world.

A man who doubts the existence of God is therefore a man who has no common sense.

He is a man utterly void of right understanding. How, for instance, would he solve the plain and simple problem proposed by Fénélon? But it is more the heart than the mind that is sick among irreligious men of this stamp.

They are almost always either men destitute of morality, or men who, having superficially adopted the spirit of dangerous books, have

given up their religious Belief, and, having accepted doubtful assumptions against the Faith, imagine that they have strong minds. For such as these one must have strong pity.

Real, steadfast, unshaken atheism is only to be found among animals. When man desires to live like the animals, he may well ape for a time their absence of religion.

How many have been atheists in words, and have suddenly changed when they have stood face to face with death!

A celebrated anatomist has said: "Give me the tongue of a dead dog, and I will make it howl at atheists." "Give me," one might add, "the tongue of an atheist, and I will prove to its owner, by an analysis of the wonders it presents, that he is himself either a madman or a liar."

The surest way to believe in God is so to live that we do not fear His righteous judgments; and to live thus is to practise with care all that religion teaches—to be a good and faithful Catholic.

GOD.

THE first of the truths contained in the Apostles' Creed relates to the existence and the nature of God, our Creator and our Sovereign Master. We shall not insist here upon the existence of this great God—a truth so evident that all people in all ages have unanimously recognized it, notwithstanding human passions, errors, and the prejudices created by false religions. Reason and Faith agree upon this point, and there cannot be upon earth a veritable atheist.

There is one God, Creator of the world, by whom all things were made, and who Himself was made by none, a Being infinite in His essence and in all His ineffable perfections, infinite in His goodness, in His wisdom, in His almighty power; infinite in knowledge and in justice; a pure Spirit who cannot be seen by the physical sight, but by the inward light of intelligence; whom we cannot hear with our ears, but who speaks to our hearts; whom we cannot touch with our hands, but to whom we may unite ourselves by love. God is truth, life, holiness, perfection, beauty, and infinite goodness. All that His creatures possess that is good, great, or noble, is but a pale reflection of His goodness, His beauty, and His glory. He is the first principle and the end of all things, most especially of man, who is His adopted son, His living temple, created to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to possess Him eternally in the next.

Such is the grand and sublime belief that the Christian faith gives us. No philosopher has ever conceived anything similar to it, and it has been necessary for God to reveal Himself to us by His prophets, and by Jesus Christ, His only Son, in order to initiate us into the secrets of His being. He has likewise taught us, and we therefore firmly believe, that there are in Him three Persons, essentially distinct and inseparable, equal in all things, having the same infinite and divine nature, the same adorable perfections, being one and the same God. These three Persons are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father is God; the Son is God even as the Father; the Holy Ghost is God even as the Father and the Son; and these three Persons are one God, and not three Gods; one Lord, and not three Lords; one Eternal, and not three Eternals. The Father is invisible, also the Son, also the Holy Ghost. "No one has seen God at any time," says the Gospel, "but His only Son Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who has made Him known unto the world." The Father eternally begets the Son, who is wisdom, truth, and light; from the Father and the Son proceeds eternally the Holy Ghost, who is love and life, the ineffable union of the Father and the Son. Such is the mystery of the divine nature of one God in three Persons, which is called by faith the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity. The Father does all things by His Son through His Holy Spirit, by His wisdom in His love. It is thus that He created the heaven and the earth, by His Son Jesus Christ; and in His holy love all that exists exists only through God, and rests in Him alone. With the first creature commenced the centuries in the midst of which we live, and out of which we pass to enter into the eternity of God. There are two kinds of creatures—the reasonable, whom God has destined to possess Him in this world and for all eternity; and those without reason, destined to serve others. Creatures gifted with intelligence are angels and men, pure spirits and spirits united to bodies; creatures without reason are animals, plants, and the rest of creation.

Man, who resembles angels in his soul and material creatures in his body, is the king of the world, with Jesus Christ, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, God-made Man.

Among the angels, some were faithful to God, and are happy others revolted through pride, and are damned eternally. The good angels accompany man, and sustain him in the path of right; the wicked angels, whom we call evil spirits or devils, desire to make him join in their revolt and condemnation, by causing him to fall into sin. The first man, Adam, the father of all, succumbed to

temptation, and incurred, both for himself and his children, the chastisement of sin. We shall see further how God deigned to retrieve this great fall, and how Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made man, came to expiate the sin of Adam, and to restore life, spiritual and eternal, to the work of His own hands.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

PROVIDENCE is that care which God takes of all His creatures, and especially of His intelligent creature, man.

Those who say that God does not trouble Himself about us are thoughtless, not to say absurd; for it is impossible to conceive the idea of God without Providence.

It is impossible that the Almighty God, knowing and seeing all things, should abdicate His sovereign empire over His creatures, and that after having made them, He should cease to govern them. It is impossible that God, holy and just, necessarily desiring good and detesting evil, should remain indifferent to our actions, good and wicked. This is the whole meaning of Providence. God does for us what the father of a family does for his children: He watches over us; He teaches us what is good and what is evil; He shows us the right path which we must follow, and the wrong one which we must avoid; He punishes us when we disobey Him, and rewards us when we do His holy will. What, I ask, could be more simple or natural than this? When we doubt the divine Providence, it is from ignorance, or rather forgetfulness, of two or three great truths, without which the world would be an undecipherable enigma.

The first of these truths is, that under the operations of God we remain free to do good or evil. God does not govern us as He governs the material world, the stars, the elements, and animals. He treats us as reasonable creatures, capable of freely accepting and acquiring the treasure of happiness. He neglects nothing to make us choose the right: instructions, warnings, tender invitations, terrible threats; He spares nothing. He overwhelms us with His graces; He surrounds us with help; but He does not force us; to do that would be to destroy His own work. He respects in us the gifts that He has given us.

The second truth, often forgotten, is that this present life is but a preparation for that eternal life which awaits us beyond the grave.

The third, that we are no longer in that pure and perfect state in which God created us, but in a state of moral disorder, and thence

forth of expiation, by reason of sin. The grace of God has been, it is true, restored to us by Jesus Christ our Redeemer, but in such a manner that divine justice must still exercise its imprescriptible rights.

Whoever keeps these three fundamental truths of Christianity before his eyes will find that all difficulties with regard to Providence immediately disappear. The world, life, everything appears in a different light. Happiness is no longer, for the Christian, what men of the world call by that name—pleasure, wealth, and worldly glory. Happiness is anything that may most perfectly prepare him for that infinite, ineffable, and eternal blessedness for which this life is only a short preparation; and from that time he understands why Jesus Christ has said in the Gospel: "Blessed are the poor, blessed are they that mourn, blessed are they that weep, blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Evil becomes an equally different thing; and, when asking God each day to deliver him from evil, the Christian only asks to be delivered from all that could deprive him of that eternal happiness which is the only real, pure, and unchangeable good. Suffering, tears, and the thousand troubles of this life are for him henceforth but the just punishment of sin. Religion teaches him that these inevitable trials are but transient afflictions, designed by his loving Father in heaven to prove his fidelity, to purify him from his faults, to render him more like his crucified Saviour, and to cause him to merit a still greater happiness in his eternal home. By the help of religion he bears them with patience, sometimes even with joy, and loves the Fatherly hand which only strikes to save.

Be a Christian, and you will comprehend Providence. If you are not a Christian, you can understand nothing that relates to God, to man, to human life, to all that surrounds you. If sometimes, among your trials and delusions, there arise in your heart some murmur, some doubt of God's providence; if you are tempted to ask why there are so many irregularities of condition in this present life; why this man is born poor, and that one rich; why so much trouble and affliction for some, and so much prosperity for others; why this man should be in such a place, and yourself in another; why the rigor of the seasons; why the privations of poverty; why this want of fortune, of health, when health and fortune would be so beneficial to you; why this guilty man should go unpunished, and this righteous man be overwhelmed by trouble; why the beneficent man should be taken away by death, while the wicked man remains—

remember eternity, think of Jesus Christ crucified: there lies the solution of the problem!

God is patient because He is eternal. He rewards by the fleeting prosperity of the world the little good which may be done by this wicked man, this great sinner, who shall reap in a terrible eternity the punishment he deserves. And, as regards the righteous accounted by the world unfortunate, God is causing them to expiate by short affliction those faults which are inseparable from human weakness, while He prepares for them an eternal crown by which their virtue shall be everlastingly rewarded. Eternity is the justification of divine Providence. It is by the measure of eternity that we must judge all that happens to us in this world. In any other way it is, we repeat, impossible that we should understand any of the designs of God. All that God does is well done, and if He permit evil, it is always for the sake of a greater good.

AN ANECDOTE OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

A POOR woman received formerly a double portion of food every day from a religious house. This consisted of a dinner for herself and her aged husband, a cobbler by trade, but who was at that time without employment.

Poor from her childhood, she had learned by a painful experience to pity the poor; she had compassion for the miseries of hunger and the pangs of destitution because she had known them herself. She lived in a wretched cottage, where, notwithstanding her own distress, she gladly welcomed those who were still poorer than herself, and often found means of helping them. Among the number was a poor orphan child eight years old, to whom she always gave a portion of her scanty repast. One day as she returned home with her usual basket of food, he was watching for her at the door. "I am so hungry, mother," he cried when he saw her coming; "do give me something to eat; I have not had anything to-day." "Here, my child," she answered, "eat at once, but leave me a little, for I too have had no breakfast to-day." He began eating so eagerly, she had not the heart to interrupt him, and the dinner rapidly disappeared. When it was all gone, the child flung his arms affectionately round his kind friend, kissed her and thanked her, and went away singing. The good woman standing at her door watched him till he was out of sight. "And my dinner too," she thought, "is gone, and what will my poor husband say? what can I give him?"

As she was indulging in these sad reflections, her attention was attracted by a little white dog running rapidly toward her, followed closely by a large mastiff. The puppy held in its mouth something almost as large as itself, which, as it came nearer, she saw to be an enormous slice of bread. It ran straight up to the poor woman, put the bread down at her feet without touching it, and escaped in another direction. The large dog stopped some little distance off. Stupefied, the good woman picked up the bread; lying upon it there was also a large slice of meat, enough to make a good repast! She returned to the house.

"Oh, my God!" she cried, falling on her knees, and shedding tears of joy, "in this way Thou dost restore to me the dinner of which I had deprived myself for Thy sake!" This was the dinner of Providence! No dinner had ever been eaten in that pious household with so good an appetite, and the poor woman might have been heard singing merrily all that evening, so light-hearted did she feel at this mark of God's protection!

THE DEVIL.

THE Catholic Faith teaches that a spirit exists whom we call the devil or the demon, and who exerts his power for evil in the world, to try the fidelity of Christians and to punish the sins of men. One would be a heretic who dared to deny this point of Christian doctrine, and to pretend that the devil is not a living, personal being. Just as we ourselves consist of two constituent principles, the one spiritual and invisible, which is the soul, the other material and visible, which is the body; even so the world consists of two orders of creatures: the spiritual and invisible, who are spirits; the material and visible, who are bodies. Our soul is that power which animates and gives action to our body; spirits, although in a different manner, do also constitute a hidden force, and are therefore able to influence material bodies, and to communicate to them certain qualities, certain developments, and different impulses. Among these spirits, whose number is incalculable, there are many who are in rebellion against God, who are engaged in contest with the good spirits, and are endeavoring by all possible means to bring disorder into the world, and to disturb its harmony.

The faithful spirits are called angels, that is, messengers of God; the rebellious spirits are called demons, from a Greek word which

signifies evil spirit; or rather devils, from another Greek word, which signifies adversary, enemy, disturber.

The most powerful of the good angels is called by the Church the Archangel Saint Michael, which name signifies, None is like to God; the chief of the wicked spirits is called Lucifer, which means Light-bearer, because it is the vocation of this spirit to preside over light; and also Satan, which means the Rebel. He is commonly called the devil (although there are many others), because he is the head and representative of them all.

The devil is our personal enemy, because, created in the image of Jesus Christ, we are destined to be, both on earth and in heaven, the children of that God whose holy authority Satan rejects.

He attacks us in all manner of ways, and tries especially to make us sin, so that, separated from Jesus Christ, we may lose the happiness of heaven.

The devil tempts us either directly or indirectly; directly, by suggesting to us thoughts of pride, guilty desires, wicked and perverse inclinations, by turning us away from prayer, from Holy Communion, from the service of God, and from good works; indirectly, by means of what the Gospel calls "the world," sinful examples, the corrupting influences of bad society and sinful pleasures. Thus Satan labors incessantly, either personally or by means of sinners who are his servants, to bring us to ruin.

Let us guard against temptations. The enemy is powerful and subtle; let us be stronger and more active than he. If we are faithful to prayer, to frequent Communion, to good reading, if we avoid all dangerous occasions, we have nothing to fear, and our Saviour, who dwells within us, will speak to our hearts and say, as He said to His first disciples: "Have confidence; I have overcome the world. Abide in me, and I in you." If, on the contrary, we live habitually in religious indifference, if we neglect prayer and the Sacraments, if pernicious literature furnish us with food for thought, if we do not fly from dangerous occasions, our ruin is certain. God has Himself declared it: "He who despises small things shall fall little by little. He who loves danger shall perish in it." What power has an unarmed man against a terrible lion? St. Peter says to all Christians: "Be sober and watch; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour, whom resist ye, strong in faith." Satan is therefore the instigator of all sin. God, being in truth infinite goodness, cannot be in any sense the author of evil; and one of the most perfidious artifices of Satan is to

tempt us to assume the reverse, and to become irritated against God when we suffer, as if it were God who was doing us harm. The Holy Scripture shows us clearly the disastrous influence that the devil has over us in the well-known history of Job. Hordes of robbers carried off in one day all the flocks and possessions of this holy man; a violent wind came from the desert and overthrew the house in which his children lived, depriving him thus of all his family; a frightful sickness struck him, covering him with a grievous leprosy, burning his blood and withering his bones; lastly, poverty overwhelmed him with its horrible privations, and he took refuge on a dunghill, where his friends, and even his wife, came to insult him, and to persuade him to curse God.

What was the real secret cause of all these evils? God teaches us Himself: it was Satan, it was the devil, who obtained from the Lord permission to try Job.

But God, who brings good out of evil, makes use of the wickedness of Lucifer and the rebellious angels to sanctify His servants. Devils, like men, have then the power to do evil; but God makes use of the wickedness of Satan and the other devils to make us expiate our sins by many different trials, and also to cause us to practise very excellent virtues, which prepare for us in heaven an incomparable increase of happiness. One of the greatest misfortunes of the age is that, in practice at least, people believe no longer in the devil. And thus he sports with victims who desire to believe no longer in the existence of their tormentor.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

THE devil has no adversary more formidable than the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Saviour, and Queen of the Church.

An error sufficiently common in these days is to regard devotion to the Blessed Virgin as among those religious practices which are undoubtedly good, but not essential to Christianity. This indifference toward the Mother of God proceeds from an indifference very common and still more deplorable—an indifference, alas! to the Son of God Himself, even our Lord Jesus Christ; and this does not usually arise from wickedness or evil intentions, but simply from ignorance.

The Christian religion is the knowledge, love, and service of God, taught to men by Jesus Christ, God made man; and Jesus Christ is man only through the agency of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is

thus the way by which God came down to us. The Son of God has, then, a Father, who is the almighty, infinite, and unapproachable God; also a Mother, who is Mary, the highest, the holiest of creatures. In order for God to become Jesus, that is to say, our Saviour and our Brother, Mary was, by the divine decrees, as necessary as the Eternal Father; and in the sacred mystery of the Incarnation, the foundation of all Christianity, it is impossible to separate these three names—God, Jesus, Mary.

Even as Jesus Christ has come to us through His holy Mother, it is through her that we must go to Him. Jesus may be compared to a fragrant flower: His divinity, invisible and entirely spiritual, is the perfume of the flower; His humanity, visible and entirely penetrated by divinity, is the flower itself; and the stem which supports the flower and has produced it is the Virgin Mary. If you desire to have the perfume you must necessarily have the flower, and you cannot take the flower but by the stem which bears it. Thus to reach God it is absolutely necessary to be a Christian, namely, to know and to serve Jesus Christ; and to be a Christian, you must love the Blessed Virgin and give to her the honor that she merits.

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, of which we are all the members. From this divine Head flow the life and strength which animate the members; the necessary channel through which the Church receives all that is given to her by God is the Blessed Virgin.

It is easy to understand how Protestant sects, which reject the Blessed Virgin, do at the same time unintentionally and unconsciously reject our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But we, being Catholics, continue in the truth; one might add that we continue by this means in love, and in the most consoling confidence. What can we fear? We have not only a God who has made Himself our Brother and our Redeemer, but this Redeemer, whose divine Majesty we might have still feared by reason of our sins, gives to us a mediatrix between Himself and us, the sweet and most merciful Virgin Mary His Mother, a simple creature like ourselves, and who, having all manner of justice to exercise against sinners, can only inspire them with confidence and hope. Therefore, if we have recourse to Mary we need never be discouraged, and, great sinners though we may be, at the moment we sincerely repent we feel assured that we shall be favorably received by our Father and our Judge, to whose feet our dear Mother leads us. How often, in the lifetime of a family, it has happened that a mother has obtained from a justly angry father the pardon of a guilty child! The Church is the great family of the

children of God; and the Blessed Virgin was constituted upon Calvary Mother and Protectress of the Church as well as of each of its members.

Let us be Christians, and render to the Mother of God the homage that is due to her; let us never pronounce but with reverence her sacred name; let us often salute her by one of those beautiful prayers with which the Holy Spirit has inspired the Church, and of which the most wonderful is also the simplest. You have known it from your childhood: it is the Hail Mary, that sweet and heavenly prayer first uttered by the Angel Gabriel upon the day of the Annunciation.

Let us always wear some sign of our devotion toward Mary, the medal or the scapular of the Immaculate Conception. Let us endeavor to keep in our room a statue or a picture of the Blessed Virgin; and when our heart is oppressed by sadness, when the trials of life weigh too heavily upon us, when temptations assail us with greater violence, let us turn our eyes to the image of our Protectress, and entreat the omnipotent Queen of Heaven never to abandon us, and to shed upon us the blessings of her Divine Son.

Thus Mary will always preserve us in the service of Jesus Christ, which is no other than the service of God.

MARY IMMACULATE.

On the 8th of December, 1854, the city of Rome witnessed one of the greatest religious acts which has ever stirred the hearts of Christians since the foundation of the Church. The supreme Head of Religion, the Sovereign Pontiff, the Vicar and representative of our Lord Jesus Christ upon earth, defined as an article of faith the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Let us meditate for a moment on this memorable event, and on the glorious mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

Our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX., was the two hundred and fifty-eighth successor of St. Peter, chief of the Apostles and the first Pope. Pius IX., like all the Pontiffs his predecessors, and like St. Peter himself, is the Vicar of Jesus Christ, His visible representative among us. He is the spiritual head of all Bishops, of all Priests, of all Christians; he is commissioned by God to govern the Church, to teach it all that must be believed and to lead it in the way of salvation. The Pope is a man like to ourselves; nevertheless, when we obey him, and when we surround him with reverence and love, it is God Himself whom we obey, it is the authority of God that we

reverence and love, because, man though he be, he is invested with spiritual power from Our Lord. When the Pope teaches, it is Jesus Christ who teaches; when the Pope commands or forbids, it is Jesus Christ who commands or forbids.

In 1854 the Pope Pius IX. judged, in his wisdom, that the time was come to render to the Blessed Virgin Mary the most brilliant homage that she has ever received from Christians. Consequently, after having long communed with God in prayer, after having desired the prayers of the whole Catholic Church, after having interrogated all the bishops in the world, he convoked at Rome, for the 8th of December, the Feast of the Conception of Mary, all those bishops whom the care of their flocks left free to respond to his call.

A hundred and ninety-six cardinals, archbishops, and bishops assembled to surround the Sovereign Pontiff in this great solemnity, and to bear witness of the faith of their dioceses and their countries.

Everything favored this glorious *fête*. The weather was as calm and clear as in the most beautiful days of spring.

All the streets and houses of Rome were decorated with flags, and the immense Basilica of St. Peter's threw open its gates from the early dawn to an innumerable concourse of the faithful, who had hastened from the four quarters of the world. The French army, which had maintained a garrison at Rome since 1849 for the defence of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, was drawn up in grand array in the space around St. Peter's.

Toward nine o'clock the Sovereign Pontiff left the Palace of the Vatican, preceded by a long file of prelates, bishops, archbishops, and cardinals in their richest vestments, walking two and two, while reciting the Litanies of the Saints.

Among their number were twenty-one bishops of France, including the poor Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Sibour, who afterward perished by the sacrilegious hand of a furious enemy of the Blessed Virgin. Many Eastern patriarchs and bishops might have been distinguished by the particular shape of their mitres and their sacerdotal vestments.

The Holy Father, clad in an immense white cope embroidered with gold, and crowned with the sacred tiara, was carried, according to custom, on his throne, sheltered by a floating canopy of silk and gold, and scattered the divine benediction over the reverent kneeling crowd.

The Pope himself celebrated the holy mass. A magnificent chalice of massive gold, resplendent with diamonds, had been prepared for

the offering of the holy sacrifice. After the gospel, the Pope took his place upon a raised throne at the extremity of the Basilica and in front of the altar. The cardinals and bishops were ranged on his right and left, wearing their white mitres and rich vestments of cloth-of-silver embossed with gold. The oldest of the cardinals and the oldest of the bishops, accompanied by the Catholic Patriarch of the Greek Church, approaching, knelt at the feet of the Sovereign Pontiff, asking him, in the name of the Holy Catholic Church, to be willing to decree as a dogma of faith that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord, Our Creator, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, had been exempted from the universal stain of original sin, and that she was consequently immaculate in her conception. The Pope rose.

A deep emotion filled the whole assembly. He intoned the Veni Creator, to ask for the last time the guidance and illumination of the Holy Spirit; then, in the midst of a silence so profound that all the faithful could distinctly hear his voice, he read the decree of faith:

"By the authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own, we declare and define that the Blessed Virgin Mary has been, from the first moment of her conception, preserved from all stain of original sin, and that this doctrine is revealed by God. If any dare to think otherwise, let him know that he is condemned, and that he has departed from the Catholic Faith."

Such was the sense of the pontifical decree. The Holy Father was so deeply moved that he could scarcely command his voice, and was often obliged to pause. All eyes were filled with tears, and even those who had come, attracted by curiosity, to witness so grand a ceremonial, were won, in spite of themselves, by the display of such powerful Christian emotion.

The whole world responded by a prolonged acclamation of joy and gratitude to the infallible voice of the successor of St. Peter. The glory of Mary was universally celebrated; and for more than six months the religious journals were filled with descriptions of continual rejoicings. Many towns in France, Germany, and elsewhere were solemnly consecrated to the Immaculate Virgin. Commemorative statues were everywhere erected, and in France a national subscription was set on foot with the purpose of erecting in the centre of the country, on the summit of the rock which rises above the town of Puy, a colossal statue of Mary Immaculate, for which purpose the Emperor gave all the necessary metal from the Russian cannon taken at Sebastopol.

It is not by such means as these that *we* can show devotion to the Mother of God; but let us try with our whole heart to prove it, in every way we can. We will always keep her image in our rooms, and let it be more precious to us than anything except the crucifix. We will always wear a medal representing Mary, conceived without sin; and we will never allow a day to pass without entreating the help of our powerful Protectress and most merciful Mother. Let us love the Blessed Virgin as Jesus loved her first. Yet this will be no easy task, for we can never love her, can never honor her, so much as He did. Let us imitate the sanctity of our dear Mother, her purity, her humility, her sweetness, her life of laborious poverty, her faithfulness in little things; but more than all, let us imitate her intense and unutterable love for Jesus, and let us so live that when our race is run she shall know us for her children, and conduct us to an eternal rest in the glorious paradise of the redeemed.

THE ANNUNCIATION AND THE INCARNATION.

On a certain 25th of March, 4,004 years after the creation of Adam and Eve, 2,957 years after the Deluge, 1,510 years since Moses delivered the people of God, 1,032 years after the consecration of the royalty of David, 752 years after the foundation of Rome, and on the anniversary of the miraculous passage of the Red Sea, the Lord God, Almighty and All-merciful, sent the Archangel Gabriel to a virgin of the name of Mary, living in the little town of Nazareth in Galilee, to announce to her the Incarnation of the Son of God.

Mary was then about fourteen, and was betrothed to Joseph, her near relation, descended like herself from the royal race of David, and of the tribe of Juda. Immaculate and purer than the angels, sweet and full of humility, the Blessed Virgin awaited, with the whole of Israel, the coming of the Divine Redeemer announced from the foundation of the world. She knew not that she was destined to be the Mother of the King of Heaven; and in her loving humility she prayed that she might even be the handmaid of her who should be blessed among women.

According to ancient tradition it was at noonday, on the 25th of March, that the Archangel Gabriel, clothed in human form and radiant with the light of heaven, appeared to Mary, who was praying at the time in a grotto hewn from the solid rock of the hill at the foot of which her house was built, as were all the houses of Naza-

THE ANNUNCIATION.

THE ANNUNCIATION

AND in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth.

To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the name of the virgin was Mary.

And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou among women.

And when she had heard, she was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be.

And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God:

Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David, his father; and he shall reign in the house of David forever.—*Luke i. 26–32.*

Mary, it was thy lowliness,
Well pleasing to the Lord,
That made thee worthy to become
The Mother of the Word.

reth. This grotto has been converted into a chapel, and may be seen, and is still venerated, in the village of Nazareth.

The holy house of Mary and Joseph, which formed the front of this grotto, was miraculously transported, by the command of God, to Loretto in Italy, in the year 1291, and pilgrims of the whole world may kneel beneath the shadow of those walls which for thirty years were sanctified by the presence of the Incarnate Word, of the Blessed Virgin, and St. Joseph.

"Hail, full of grace!" said the Archangel with deep reverence, "the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." At the sight of the angel, and at this unlooked-for salutation, the Virgin was troubled, and asked herself what it could mean. "Fear not, Mary," said the heavenly messenger, "for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus (that is to say, Saviour). He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father; and He shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end."

In her childhood Mary had taken the vow of perpetual virginity; Joseph also was bound by this vow; and if Mary had consented to marry him, it was only that she might have a protector of her youth and innocence, and a sure guide in the path of holiness. When the Archangel Gabriel announced to her that she was destined to become a mother, Mary, fearful for the glory of her holy virginity, asked immediately how that was possible, since she was forever consecrated to God.

Then the angel, explaining to her the designs of God, reassured her, and declared to her that this maternity, as much above all other maternities as the heavens are above the earth, should be a miracle beyond all miracles, and should cast no shadow on her perfect purity. "The Holy Ghost," he said, "shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." And as a sign that God was working wonders above all human reason, Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin the miraculous conception of St. John the Baptist, the forerunner of the adorable Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, of whom she should herself become the mother. "Behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren Because no word shall be impossible with God "

Then the most Holy Virgin, completely annihilating herself before the adorable will of God, became possessed of an unutterable joy, and of a love more intense than the love of cherubims and seraphims; and thus she gave her definite consent to the divine proposition, and lifting up her heart to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, answered in the words which have been the world's salvation: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy word." And at that very instant the Eternal Word, equal in all things to the Father and the Holy Spirit, the living God, Creator of all that exists, King and Lord of men, Ruler of heaven and earth, became incarnate in the womb of Mary, since He formed for Himself a body from the very substance of the body of the Blessed Virgin, created a soul which He united to this body; and thus united His own divine and eternal person to this soul and to this body in the womb of Mary, that GOD became truly *man*, truly the son of Mary, while she became truly His mother, truly the Mother of GOD.

The Blessed Virgin is indeed the mother of Him who is both God and man, true God and true man, and who unites within Himself, in an indivisible manner, the divine and human nature. This title and this glory of being MOTHER OF GOD surpasses all that God has ever done, or ever could do, for a simple creature. By this name alone the Virgin Mary is raised incalculably above all saints, all angels and archangels and celestial powers, above all cherubim and seraphim, who are only, after all, the servants of that God of whom MARY is the mother. By virtue of her divine maternity, Mary has become the Queen of Heaven, the Queen of the Church, the Queen of saints, the Queen of the whole world. Let us, therefore, like the Angel Gabriel, salute her every day with mingled love and reverence; for thus the faithful upon earth may unite themselves to the faithful in heaven, saying, with heartfelt devotion, to their Mother and their well-beloved Queen: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus."

Every year, on the 25th of March, the Church celebrates the anniversary of that day, forever blessed, on which the Holy Virgin consented to the mystery of the Incarnation, and gave to the world its Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

BETHLEHEM AND THE CHILD JESUS.

From the hour of the Annunciation, Mary bore within her sacred womb our Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God. A living ciborium, Mary contained and bore among men the body and the blood, the soul and the divinity, of the Saviour. She enclosed the whole world, the God of heaven, He whom seraphims and angels continually adore!

Nine months after, on the 24th of December, Joseph and Mary reached the little town of Bethlehem, the city of David, there to be enrolled, according to the decree of Cæsar Augustus, who then commanded the whole world.

The divine prophecies were thus unconsciously fulfilled by Augustus, and it was an unquestioned fact among the Jews that the Christ, the Messias, should be born at Bethlehem and descended from King David. On arriving at Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary found that there was no room for them in the inn; the night was approaching, and they found themselves obliged to go out of the town and to seek shelter in a grotto, which for many centuries had been a place of refuge for shepherds and their flocks. According to ancient religious traditions, David, Abraham, and Noe had frequently sought an asylum in this grotto, and at the very beginning of the human race Seth, the son of Adam, who had filled the place of Abel, had taken refuge there to pray.

Toward midnight the Blessed Virgin was warned by God that the moment was come in which the Word Incarnate should appear to the eyes of His creatures. Then she clothed herself in the white raiment she had brought for that hour, and prepared, with St. Joseph, a little hay and straw in a manger, and the swaddling-clothes upon the straw. There Mary, kneeling, lifted up her arms to heaven, and became absorbed in a blissful ecstasy—all holy and divine she knelt, the Virgin Mother of God.

A heavenly light enveloped her, and suddenly in the midst of this light there appeared to her enraptured vision the holy infant Jesus, all radiant with glory; He looked at her with love, and stretched out His little arms. Then Mary, full of joy, adored Him as her God, and, taking Him in her arms, she held Him to her heart, and covered Him with tears and kisses. Then she wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes and laid Him in the manger: Joseph on one side and Mary on the other, kneeling and prostrate before the Lord, were as the two

cherubim of gold before the ark of the alliance; they were the first to adore God made man, and they adored Him in the name of heaven and earth, with one faith, one love, and an unutterable fervor.

At the very same hour a great miracle took place in a neighboring field, where shepherds were watching their flocks during the silence of the night. An ancient tradition relates that there were three; an old man, a young man, and a child. A bright light suddenly shone round them, and an angel of the Lord stood by them: "Behold," he said, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all people: For this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and laid in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest: and on earth peace to men of good will. Then the shepherds, being struck with amazement, said one to another: "Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath showed to us." And they came with haste: and they found Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in a manger. Then they adored Him, received His first benedictions, and returned to their flocks, glorifying and praising God. Thus the child Jesus chose from among the poor His first worshippers and earliest disciples. Having Himself become poor for love of us, Our Lord makes choice of the poor before the rich, and gives to them this consolation among all the troubles and privations by which they are overwhelmed.

Nevertheless, a little time after, the rich, and wise, and noble were admitted in their turn to adore the holy Child of Bethlehem. They were called Magi, and came from the East. A star, a miraculous light, warned them of the birth of the Saviour, and they immediately departed, carrying with them rich gifts, until they also arrived at Bethlehem; then, their earnest faith piercing the veil which hid from their eyes the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, they prostrated themselves at His feet, adored Him as their God, and offered to Him gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Rich and poor, we are each and all of us called upon thus to believe in and adore the infant Jesus; the little Child in the manger at Bethlehem is verily our God, the one true, living, and eternal God, who for love of us came down from heaven to earth. Not content with abasing His infinite Majesty to the very level of His creatures by becoming their Master and their Brother, He did still more, since He took upon Himself the whole burden of sin by which they had

ADORATION OF THE THREE HOLY KINGS.

Adoration of the Three Holy Kings

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Juda in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem.

Saying: Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and we are come to adore him.

And Herod, the king, hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

. . . . . .

Then Herod privately calling the wise men, inquired of them diligently the time of the star's appearing to them.

And sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go, and search diligently after the child; and when you have found him bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him.

. . . . . .

And going into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him; and opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. —*Matthew ii. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 11.*

See! amid the winter's snow,
Born for us on earth below;
See! the tender Lamb appears,
Promised from eternal years!
Hail! thou ever-blessed morn!
Hail! Redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

been eternally lost, and thus all are saved who believe and hope in Jesus Christ, who adore Him, and return Him love for love, and who are obedient in all things to His holy Church; and all who remain faithful unto death are assured of the eternal happiness of heaven. Jesus Christ is the Lord our God, and in His eternal glory He is infinitely worthy of our homage and adoration; but He is also our very tender, very merciful child Saviour, and in His willing abjection He is infinitely worthy of our love.

And what dignity could be greater or more sublime than that of the Blessed Virgin?

Still Mary, like Jesus, merits our love as much as our veneration: she is as good as she is great, as gentle as she is pure, as merciful as she is perfect and holy!

Jesus, Mary, Joseph! names full of blessing and salvation! How happy we are to have so merciful a God, and ever near Him two such powerful intercessors!

Let us live, like Mary and Joseph, quiet, peaceful lives, all filled with love of the child Jesus, who reposes in our hearts as in a second manger, a manger which is often, alas! as cold and comfortless as that of Bethlehem.

Let us, like the shepherds, go with fervor, with love, with gladness, and, above all, with a lively faith, into our churches, where we can always find the Child of Bethlehem hidden and humiliated there, as once within the swaddling-clothes, so now beneath the veils of the Most Holy Eucharist.

The Catholic Church is the thrice-honored Bethlehem which possesses and encloses Jesus Christ, and which by giving Him to faithful hearts consoles all the sorrows of humanity, and saves the world by teaching it to know, to serve, and to love the Saviour.

NAZARETH.

After His birth at Bethlehem the holy child Jesus was carried by His mother and St. Joseph into Egypt, in order to escape the persecution of Herod. He remained there two years and a half, and it is related in the traditions of that country that many great and touching miracles signalized the presence of the Infant God. Among others it is said that a little child was cured of leprosy by being bathed in the water which the Blessed Virgin had used to wash her Divine Son, and that this child, who as he grew up fell into sin, was the penitent thief, saved a second time by Jesus upon Calvary.

When the tyrant Herod was dead, the Holy Family returned to Judea, and went to live at Nazareth in Galilee, in the same house where the annunciation of the Angel Gabriel had taken place, and where the Son of God was first made man within the womb of Mary. There Jesus grew up under the eyes of His mother and His adopted father. There, until the age of thirty, in prayer, in silence, in the most profound humility, in poverty and work, in tears and penance, He prepared the great work of the world's salvation, which He preached for two years and a half before He consummated it upon the Cross, and returned triumphant to His eternal glory.

The hidden life of Our Lord at Nazareth is one of the most instructive and consoling mysteries of Christianity. It is the most direct, efficacious, and powerful remedy for the vanity which incessantly urges us to seek for human glory, to desire worldly praise and approbation, and to fear the gaze of men more than the eye of God. From the poor and simple home at Nazareth, Jesus speaks to each and all, and says: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls. I have given you an example, that as I have done, so you do also." Let us be, then, disciples of Jesus, like our Master, and for love of our Master, meek and humble of heart; let us turn aside from the flattering delusions of self-love; let us each day restrain the pride which renders us arrogant and self-sufficient, which urges us to rebel against the authority of our parents, our priests, and other lawful superiors, which prevents us acknowledging all our sins in confession, and which leads us into all manner of wrong-doing. Let us rather humiliate ourselves constantly and courageously, like our most holy Master, and learn to live unnoticed and unknown, poor and insignificant, in the midst of a world which understands nothing of divine truths, and which cares and seeks for nothing but the soap-bubbles of glory, honor, and riches, dignity, grandeur, and praise.

Until the age of thirty the Son of God was willing to live entirely and constantly subject to Mary and to Joseph. "*Et erat subditus illis;* and He was subject to them." And this is all the Gospel tells us! What a lesson for young men, true scions of this age of progress—who, on their first entrance into life, seem seized with the spirit of insubordination; who imagine that even at fifteen or sixteen years old it is no longer fitting that they should obey either father or mother; and that to confess their sins, to pray, and to go to church, are actions unworthy of a young man! They dream of freedom, independence, and liberty, while their enfeebled minds cannot rise to

any right comprehension of the noble examples which shine forth from that home at Nazareth. They cannot understand that parental and religious authority is the greatest safeguard of youth, and can in no way destroy its happiness. They blush to obey; because they are, they say, "men": as if Jesus were not a man in a most eminent degree, GOD made man; a man, the model of all men! and it was not only until ten or twelve years, it was not only until fifteen or sixteen years of age that Jesus obeyed, and was willing to obey to give us an example, *exemplum dedi vobis;* it was until eighteen, until twenty, until twenty-five, yes, even until thirty years, that He was obedient and "subject." Alas! how few of us, in this present generation, would feel in our right element in that holy simple home at Nazareth! It would be necessary first for our lives to be so transformed that the atmosphere of our Saviour's sacred retreat should be similar to that of our own homes and daily surroundings. The natural atmosphere of a true Christian is humility, obedience, gentleness, and recollection; in one word, it is Jesus Christ Himself; Jesus Christ known (and how few know Him to-day); Jesus Christ loved (and how few love Him truly); Jesus Christ imitated (alas! does not the number of those who imitate Him recall only too forcibly the ten just men of Sodom!).

Mary and Joseph, while commanding their well-beloved Jesus, were guided only by His example, by His words, by His whole life, which was to them the Divine school of perfect sanctity. Eternity alone will reveal to us the ineffable progress made by these two privi leged and ever-faithful souls in this school of God! The life of Je sus, Mary, and Joseph was a life of peace and love, of perfect sim plicity and holiness, of penance, work, and prayer! They gladly accepted all the privations of their severe poverty. . . . Jesus had but one thought—the perfect accomplishment of the will of His Father in Heaven, and of Mary and of Joseph upon earth, since their will was to Him the earthly shadow of that heavenly will: Mary and Joseph lived by His example in incomparable subjection to that heavenly will which Jesus made clear to them. And they all lived from day to day simply intent on doing well all that they did; and the holy Virgin and the holy Joseph, amid the shadows of the purest, most unquestioning faith, adored the mystery of the Incarnation, the mystery of that long silence of the Word made flesh, the mystery of that hidden life at Nazareth and of those long years which seem to human wisdom time lost in the redemption of the world.

Joseph died happily and peacefully at Nazareth, in the midst of

these luminous shadows, in the arms of Jesus and Mary, tenderly watched and cared for by Him who is "the resurrection and the life." Happy he who falls asleep like Joseph in the love of Jesus and Mary, after a pure and simple life passed in prayer and work, in penance and obscurity. Saint Joseph, we can well understand, is the patron of a happy death.

Let us think of Nazareth when work grows hard and wearisome, when the yoke of a simple, unassuming life becomes galling to our pride, when we are carried away by foolish gusts of worldly vanity, when self-love urges us to seek distinction, and especially when the spirit of independence whispers in our ears the seductive theories of false liberty. . . . O Jesus! save us from these insidious temptations; and help us to comprehend still more clearly the sanctifying mystery of Thy hidden life at Nazareth!

JESUS CHRIST.

We have seen what faith truly is; we have seen how entirely worthy of God and of ourselves is that idea which Christianity gives us of our Creator, the almighty and eternal Lord, infinite and supreme; one God in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

But this infinite God would have been utterly unknown to us if He had not, in His love, revealed Himself. This is what He has been doing ever since the commencement of the world, by the ministry of His angels, by the inspiration of patriarchs and prophets, and more than all by the incarnation of His own beloved Son, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary about forty centuries after the fall of Adam. The coming of Our Lord is the central point to which all ages tend, and round that one event all the past and future hopes and possibilities of the human race eternally revolve.

To say all that Jesus Christ is would be beyond the possibilities of human speech.

He is the invisible God become visible, and appearing in the midst of His creatures; He is the infinite, eternal, and almighty Creator, clothed with a humanity like unto ours, and become, for love of us, mortal, passible, subject to time and to all human miseries save sin. Jesus is the only God, Creator of all things, Creator of angels and of men, our first principle and our last end, whose knowledge is true light, whose service is true joy, whose love is the only true happiness.

In Jesus Christ divinity and humanity are united in an indivisible and perfect manner, without being confounded. There is in Him one, and one only Person, which is the Person of God the Son, and for this reason Jesus Christ is eternal, infinite, and almighty; in one word, He is GOD. But at the same time He is man. He was created, He was born, He grew, He suffered, He died as perfectly man as He is perfectly God. In eternity He has a Father, and no mother; in time He has a mother, the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, and no father. He derives from His father His divine and infinite nature, and from His mother His human and mortal nature. It is through Him we gain access to God His Father, and it is through His mother that we gain access to Him. Jesus is the mysterious bridge which unites in one the Creator and the creature, being Himself both Creator and creature, God and man; and the arch by which this heavenly bridge is united to creation is the most holy Virgin, who gives to Him her own humanity. Jesus Christ is to His creatures just what the head is to the members of the body; the head guides and directs the whole body, communicating life to it; in like manner Jesus communicates to all men, who are His members, divine and eternal life, and the Blessed Virgin is the most pure channel by which all His graces reach us.

You know the touching story of our divine Master's life on earth. During the three years of His public life He preached the gospel; that is to say, He taught to men the knowledge and love of God His Father, and proved His divinity by many miracles, which His enemies themselves could not deny; He chose, moreover, among His numerous disciples, twelve poor fishermen to preach the one true faith throughout the world, thus confounding the pride and vain wisdom of men. Having come into this world to expiate our sins, He took their burden upon Him, and died for us freely and willingly, betrayed by Judas, mocked and scourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified between two thieves upon Mount Calvary in Judea; died, with one last divine cry, upon Good Friday, at three o'clock. On Easter Sunday He rose again, by His own power, for our sakes, triumphant over Satan, sin, and death; then He showed Himself during the space of forty days to His Apostles, and to many other disciples, who, being at first incredulous, were afterward obliged to yield before an overwhelming evidence. After giving to them His last supreme instructions, the risen Jesus ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives, where He commenced His Passion, and it is He, both God and man, King of the world, and Judge of all men who

will come hereafter to judge us according to our works, and to cast out of His presence, into hell, the devil and all the wicked, and to gather together in a glorious eternity His own most faithful servants.

We shall soon see how we are all united by means of His Church, which is the depository of all the treasures of His love.

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST.

A MIRACLE is a visible fact, entirely above and beyond the natural order of things; it is the unusual exercise of God's almighty power.

To deny the possibility of miracles is also to deny the power of God, or rather His existence.

Miracles being the seal of divinity, if Jesus Christ were God, He was, in a manner, bound to work miracles, undoubted miracles, miracles by His own power, bearing the impress of His Godhead; and we have, like the Jews of Capharnaum, a right to ask of Him: What sign dost Thou show unto us that we may believe?

Jesus Christ does in no way shrink from this trial. His acts speak even more clearly than His words.

The second time that He went up to Jerusalem for the feast of the tabernacles, Jesus, followed by His disciples, met a poor beggar, blind from his birth. And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who hath sinned—this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes, and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloe." The blind man went therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

But his neighbors would not recognize him. "This is not he," they said, "but a man who is like him." But he said, "I am he." They said therefore to him, "How were thy eyes opened?" He answered, "That man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash.' And I went, I washed, and I see." They bring him to the Pharisees, who were met together in the Temple, for it was the Sabbath. The Pharisees were confounded. They questioned the blind man, who told them simply what had passed. "What sayest thou," they asked, "of Him that hath opened thy eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet."

The Jews then did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and had received his sight, until they called his parents, and asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see?" His parents answered them, and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now seeth, we know not; ask himself."

The Pharisees therefore called the man again, and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." He said therefore to them, "If he be a sinner, I know not. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

And as they pressed him with further questions, he answered them, "I have told you already, and you have heard; why would you hear it again? Will you also become His disciples?"

They reviled him therefore, and said, "Be thou His disciple, but we are the disciples of Moses: as to this man, we know not from whence He is."

The man answered, and said to them, "Why, herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence He is, and He hath opened my eyes. From the beginning of the world, it hath not been heard that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God, He could not do anything."

They answered, and said to him, "Thou wast wholly born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" and they cast him out of the temple. And Jesus, finding him, said to him, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" Jesus answered, "It is He that talketh with thee." "I believe, Lord," cried the beggar; and falling down, he adored Him.

And it came to pass afterward that Jesus went into a city that is called Nain; and there went with Him His disciples and a great multitude.

And when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a great multitude of the city was with her. At the sight of the sorrowing mother, Jesus was touched with compassion, and said to her, "Weep not;" and He came near and touched the bier, and they that carried it stood still.

According to the Jewish custom, the dead man had his face uncovered. And Jesus said, "Young man, I say to thee, arise." And immediately he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother.

And there came a fear on them all, and they cried, "A great

prophet is risen up among us; and God hath visited His people." And the rumor of this miracle went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the country round about.

At the end of the first century, one of the immediate disciples of the apostles, by name Quadratus, addressed to the Emperor an apology for Christianity, and cited as irrefragable witnesses of the miracles of Jesus Christ many of those whom the Saviour had thus miraculously healed or restored to life, and who were still living at the time in which he wrote.

Another of the miracles of Jesus Christ had still more numerous witnesses.

Having withdrawn into Decapolis, not far from the Sea of Galilee, a crowd of people, gathered out of the neighboring towns, searched for Him three days, and at last discovered Him on a solitary mountain, surrounded by His twelve disciples, and speaking to them of the kingdom of God.

Touched with compassion at the sight of this great multitude, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, Jesus turned to the Apostle Philip, and said to him, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" Philip answered Him, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them that every one may take a little." Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, saith to Him, "There is a boy here that hath five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many?" Then Jesus said, "Make the men sit down." And there were about five thousand, not counting women and children. And Jesus took the loaves; raising His eyes to heaven, He blessed and broke, and gave to the apostles, who distributed to the crowd. In like manner also of the fishes, as much as they would.

After the repast, Jesus said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost." And they filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves that remained over and above to them that had eaten.

Just as wheat germinates in the earth, by means of the invisible and creative power of God, and becomes the food of men, so in the sacred hands of that same Creator, when visible in His humanity, bread was multiplied, and became enough for all.

Now those men, when they had seen what a miracle Jesus had done, said, "This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world."

"The prophet that should come" was no other than the Messiah, who was always thus mentioned by the Jews Then they all rose in

haste, desiring to take Jesus and make Him King; since all the prophecies relating to the Messiah announced that He should be King of Israel. But the Saviour, perceiving their intention, withdrew alone to the mountain to pray.

Jesus had commanded His Apostles to go down to the coast of Bethsaida, to take a ship, and go over the sea to Capharnaum, where He would Himself rejoin them. But a violent wind soon arose, and at the dawn of day, notwithstanding all their efforts, they had scarcely rowed the space of thirty furlongs, or three leagues. About the fourth hour they saw Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh to the ship. They thought it was a spirit, and gave utterance to their fears. But He, speaking to them immediately, said, "It is I; be not afraid."

Then Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee upon the waters." And He said, "Come." And Peter, going down out of the boat, walked upon the water to come to Jesus. But seeing the violence of the waves, he was afraid; and when he began to sink, he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me;" and immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and said to him, "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?" And when they were both come up into the boat the wind ceased, and they reached the coast. Seized with astonishment and admiration, the disciples who were in the boat fell at the feet of Jesus, and adored Him, saying, "Indeed Thou art the Son of God."

Thus God remained the Omnipotent Lord of nature, even in the deep humility of His Incarnation; all the powers of nature were obedient to Him, and, in the instant cessation of all tumult and confusion at His simple word, we may see a type of that far more serious tumult and confusion caused by sin—a type of that still deeper evil which lies within ourselves, and which Our Lord came down from heaven to heal.

We might here relate many touching miracles which the Saviour seemed to sow broadcast upon His pathway, and which form, in their divine completion, the story of the gospels: the sudden cure of the blind man at Jericho, to whom Christ said, "See!" and he saw; that of the poor woman bowed down for eighteen years by frightful suffering, and who, by the simple touch of His garments, was immediately healed. To these may be added innumerable manifestations of the divinity and of the tender pity of Jesus.

But among all His miracles there is one which is perhaps the most solemn and the most important, and which furnished the Pharisees

with a pretext for their last machinations—the resurrection of Lazarus.

Lazarus was a sick man much loved by Jesus, and was the brother of Martha and of Mary Magdalen. He lived at Bethania, four leagues from Jerusalem, and had frequently offered hospitality to the Saviour and His Apostles. Lazarus fell grievously ill, and when his sisters found that his life was in danger, they sent to Jesus, who was then in Galilee, saying, "Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus answered, "This sickness is not unto death, but that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

Notwithstanding the love which Jesus bore to Lazarus and his sisters, He still remained in the same place two days; then He said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea again. Lazarus our friend sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." His disciples therefore said, "Lord, if he sleeps he shall do well." And Jesus answered, "Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe."

Now when Jesus arrived at Bethania, He found that Lazarus had been already four days in the grave. Martha and Mary were both in their house, quite overwhelmed by grief, and their friends and relations were still with them trying to comfort them. Martha, on being told that Jesus was come, rose instantly, and came quickly to meet Him, exclaiming, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." And Jesus answered her, "Thy brother shall rise again." "I know," said Martha, "that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he be dead, shall live; and every one that liveth and believeth in Me shall not die forever. Believest thou this?" "Yea, Lord," cried the faithful Martha, "I have believed that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into this world." And she left Him to call her sister. And Mary, rising immediately, came quickly to Jesus, and falling at His feet, she echoed her sister's words, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

Jesus, therefore, when He saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her weeping, was Himself troubled in spirit, and said to them, "Where have you laid him?" They say to Him, "Lord, come and see." And Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said, "Behold, how He loved him!" But some of them said "Could not He that opened the eyes of the man born blind have caused that this man should not die?"

Jesus, therefore, again groaning in Himself, cometh to the sepulchre. Now it was a cave, and a stone was laid over it. Jesus saith, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith to Him, "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is now dead four days." "Did I not say to thee," answered the Saviour, "that if thou believe thou shalt see the glory of God?" And when the stone was taken away, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. And Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go."

And a great number of the Jews who were present there believed in Jesus Christ, and soon the fact of the resurrection of Lazarus was known throughout Jerusalem and all Judea. And on hearing it, all the enemies of the Lord were seized with rage, and they, with the high priest Caiphas, gathered a council at Jerusalem, and said, "We must resolve on some measures, for this Man works miracles, and we cannot deny it!"

Neither the Jews nor the Pagans of the first centuries ever thought of denying the miracles of Jesus Christ. And they would not have failed to do so if such a denial had been possible, as this would have been the simplest means of striking at the very root of this new belief. But how could they deny facts which were accomplished in the open daylight, within the very walls of Jerusalem, or in the principal towns of Judea, before an immense concourse of people, and even under the eyes of the enemies of the Saviour?

Still, they found it was necessary to explain away these miracles, to which the Apostles in their preaching continually appealed. Thus, not being able to deny them, they misrepresented them; sometimes they attributed them to diabolic agency, sometimes to the power of magic, and sometimes to a pretended theft of the incommunicable name of Jehovah, of which Jesus might have possessed Himself in the temple; all foolish fables which it is useless to confute.

Pride, false ideas of justice, selfish interests, and a thousand other passions formed a barrier between the Pharisees and Jesus Christ; it was to them He spoke the appalling words which the resurrection of Lazarus so forcibly justified: "Neither will ye believe if one rise again from the dead."

We may all learn one great lesson from the incredulity of the Jews. That even miracles will not give faith, but that something more is needful—a sincere love of truth, the right spirit in seeking for it, and a pure and lowly heart.

Jesus Christ said that He was God; and to this, the chief proof of His divinity, no answer can be made. He confirmed His words by His miracles; and this second proof is as clear and as unquestionable as the first.

There is no need of lengthy arguments to explain how powerful is the proof afforded by such miracles. Those worked by Our Lord are of a special nature peculiar to Himself alone; He worked them by His own power, and without invoking any power beyond His own. —"I will; be thou healed."—"Young man, I say to thee, arise."—"Lazarus, come forth." Saints and prophets have performed miracles, and great miracles, but it has been always in the name of the Lord their God. "In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ," said St. Peter to the lame man, whom he cured when entering the temple, "rise up and walk."

The Apostles, the martyrs, and the saints, from the very origin of Christianity, even down to the present time, have worked and have only been able to work miracles in the name of Jesus Christ, and by a power beyond their own.

It is impossible to deny the divine miracles of Jesus; to attempt to do so would show a will more hardened than that of Caiphas and the Pharisees—those clear-sighted and inveterate enemies of the Saviour. Let us hear their testimony, "This man works miracles, and we cannot deny it."

If we will only hold fast, in all integrity of purpose, to that love of truth of which passion had deprived the Jews, we shall draw from the miracles of Jesus the only logical and evident conclusion, and we shall cast ourselves in spirit at His sacred feet, repeating with all the faculties of our nature the words of him who was born blind: *Credo Domine*—"Lord, I believe."

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

After the three years of His public life, the Son of God made man desired to consummate by death—by the death of the cross—the merciful work of our redemption.

By sin we had deserved death; Jesus took this death upon Himself, and in exchange restored eternal life to all sinners who unite themselves to Him by ardent faith and true love, by unquestioning obedience and sincere repentance.

Innocent, and more than innocent, Jesus made satisfaction for the

guilty, and His Heavenly Father was willing to accept the substitute provided by His infinite love.

The Son of God and of Mary was now thirty-three and a half years of age. He had taught all things, and had prepared all things needful for the world's salvation. He had chosen His ambassadors and His Apostles, the ministers of His mercy, and had formed them Himself in His own school; at their head He had placed Simon Peter as their leader, the vicar of God. Nothing now remained for Him to do, in order to accomplish the prophecies, but to suffer and to die. This infinite suffering, which began at the Last Supper by the sacrilege and treason of the Apostle Judas, and was consummated on the cross of Calvary and in the sepulchre, is called the PASSION.

The Passion of the Saviour embraces in a fearful and mysterious manner every description of grief—bitterness of heart, darkness of spirit, anguish and sadness, humiliation and thirst, rending and infamy, and nameless outrage, bodily suffering and annihilations—all of which form, in union with death, the just, the most just punishment of our sins, and, at the same time, their superabundant expiation.

Each one of us, even though having little of the Christian, has often read and often meditated on all the details of that dolorous Passion—the three hours' agony in the Garden of Olives, the bloody sweat, the cowardice of the Apostles, the kiss of the traitor Judas; the blows, the insults, and the ignominious bonds on the way from Gethsemane to the palace of the high priests Annas and Caiphas; the buffeting of the high priest's servants, and the holy meekness of the divine Victim; the false witnesses, the rage, the imprecations, and the spitting; the blasphemy of Caiphas and the miserable judges now turned into tormentors; the triple denial of the unhappy St. Peter; the three or four hours of sacrilegious mockery, of blows and infamy in the prison of Caiphas' palace during the night; the definite and solemn condemnation, after Jesus had been dragged a second time before the Sanhedrim, and had once more affirmed that He was "the Christ, the Son of the living God;" the interrogatory of the base Pilate; the raillery of King Herod, philosopher and wit; the white garment of a fool and the sceptre of a reed; the silence of Christ when interrogated for the second time by Pilate; the bloody scourging of the Roman soldiers; the old scarlet mantle, and the *Ecce Homo;* the *crucifige* of all the Jewish people, and the final condemnation to death; the carrying of the cross; the sorrowful way with its fourteen stations; and, lastly, Calvary, where the Divine

Lamb, the meek and sinless Saviour, was crucified between two thieves, before His mother's eyes, and hung suspended between heaven and earth, as the standard of the world's salvation, until three in the afternoon, when He cried, "It is consummated," and commended His spirit into the hands of His Father!

Jesus crucified! How great a mystery! Nailed upon the cross, yet reigning, even then, within the highest heaven. He, who was able by His single word to work confusion to all His tormentors, to silence forever the blaspheming and iniquitous judges, His wicked persecutors! He is content to pray and suffer for them, since He is their Redeemer as well as ours; and He says to His Heavenly Father, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

On His right hand was crucified with Him a guilty thief; but this sinful man, moved to repentance, believed in Jesus Christ, and, having hope in Him, he turned to Jesus in deep humility and courageous love, and said, "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom." And Jesus answered him out of the depths of His divine mercy and infinite compassion, "This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." . . . This repentant and converted malefactor is a type of all the elect; a sinner, confessing his sins, hoping, imploring, and obtaining mercy, and expiating his sins even unto death, by uniting his sufferings to the death of the Son of God;—this robber is the representative of all, who, being sinners, suffer here below, and carry the cross as the just punishment of sin, while drawing from the inexhaustible source of the Saviour's love, pardon, salvation, and eternal life.

The other thief, the other crucified malefactor, who blasphemed Jesus Christ, believed not, asked no pardon, and died miserably upon his terrible cross;—*he* represents the sinful man who neither believes nor hopes in Jesus, who does not love the God of Calvary, and suffers uselessly on earth because he does not unite his sufferings to those of his Saviour;—this robber is the sinner for whom Jesus suffered and died, yet who refuses to profit by the salvation that is offered to him.

At the foot of the cross stood the Virgin Mary, as stands the priest before the altar, and the victim; there also was St. John, representing the Church, the priesthood, and all faithful disciples; there was St. Mary Magdalen, and other holy women, symbolizing both repentant and innocent love.

Let us, then, in union with the Blessed Virgin and St. John, with the holy women and the penitent thief, in union with all saints and

angels, adore Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, infinitely holy and infinitely beloved! May His cross recall to us incessantly His love, and may His sacred Blood, so freely shed, penetrate to the inmost recesses of our hearts, through a frequent reception of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, in which He dwells, perfect God and perfect Man, thus enabling us to participate in all the merits of His glorious redemption.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

FOURTEEN times during the course of His preaching, Jesus Christ had announced that after His suffering and His death He would rise again on the third day, and He had clearly pointed out His resurrection as the sure sign by which not only His Apostles but the faithless Jews should hereafter acknowledge that He was truly the Son of God. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." "The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

This prophecy was so well known to the enemies of Jesus, and they so thoroughly understood its great importance, that their first care, after the descent from the cross, was to watch the Holy Sepulchre, to send soldiers to guard it, and to affix the public seal on the opening to the grave. This vindictive foresight, with the incredulity of the Apostles, and especially of Thomas, have all turned to our profit; but still, the resurrection of Our Lord being for us the miracle of miracles, the proof beyond all proofs, it is of extreme importance that we should thoroughly know the details, and should rest our belief upon the evidence.

Divine Providence has, as it were, provided for this by surrounding the resurrection of the Saviour with circumstances so clear and concise as to strike conviction to the heart of any reasonable man.

After the death of Jesus, St. Peter and St. John had rejoined Mary, and had retired with her to weep and pray.

St. John himself acknowledges in his Gospel that they had all forgotten the prophetic words of the Saviour touching the resurrection. The Blessed Virgin alone, being initiated into the mysteries of Christ, knew what would happen, but hid this knowledge in her heart.

As to the Apostles, they had all dispersed on the Friday evening,

after the treason of Judas in the Garden of Olives; they had passed the Sabbath day and the day of the Passover in the deepest dejection, under the influence of one prevailing sentiment—fear of the Jews. It appears, however, that they all assembled during the night that preceded the resurrection. Thomas Didymus, seized with a sudden panic, had fled far away. Ever since the Friday evening the chief priests had sent constant relays of soldiers to guard the Saviour's tomb; this fact was not known to the holy women, who, having returned to Jerusalem, were not able to go out on the Sabbath day.

At the very moment in which day began to break, the Holy Sepulchre was suddenly shaken, and an angel of the Lord descended from heaven; and his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow, and for fear of him the guards were struck with terror, and became as dead men; the sealed door was broken open, the stone was rolled back—the Lord had risen! . . . Thus He fulfilled the word that He had spoken, "I lay down My life that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from Me: but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of My Father."

When the guards had recovered from their fright, they fled to the town, and went to relate to Caiphas and the high priests all that had just passed; but they, persistent in their unbelief and hardened by hatred, gave to the soldiers a considerable sum of money that they might spread abroad a report that, during the night, profiting by their sleep, the disciples had come and had taken away the body of their crucified Master. This foolish story has nothing to support it. The Apostles were afterward able, at Jerusalem, and even in the temple, openly to expose this palpable lie, told by the Saviour's enemies.

Mary Magdalen, the converted sinner, the faithful and courageous Christian of Calvary, went out from Jerusalem on the Sunday morning before sunrise to weep at the grave of her dead Lord and Master. When Magdalen reached the little garden, which, according to Jewish custom, surrounded the sepulchre, she saw with bewilderment that the door was open and the stone rolled back. . . . The grave was empty. She ran immediately to tell Peter and John, who hastened to the grave, Magdalen following them.

The Blessed Virgin was alone in her dwelling when, according to tradition, her beloved Son appeared first to her, as to the most worthy of all creatures.

St. John, being the younger, arrived the first, but did not venture

to go in before St. Peter, whom Jesus had already designated as the head of the Church. Peter then went down the few steps which led into the sepulchre, and assured himself of the truth. The napkin was still there, and the linen clothes that had been about the head of the Son of God were folded and lying apart.

The two Apostles were much troubled, and returned in haste to tell the other disciples what had happened. But Mary Magdalen remained there still when they were gone, and kneeling near the sepulchre, gave way to tears; but, after a little time, she drew near once more to the entrance of the tomb, and looking in, she now perceived, on each side of the stone where the body of Jesus had been laid, two angels under the form of two young men clothed in white. "Woman," said they to her, "why weepest thou?" "I weep," she answered, "because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

And as she spoke, she caught a glimpse of the figure of a man standing a little behind her, and, thinking it must be the gardener who had care of the garden graves, poor Magdalen spoke to him, weeping, "If thou has taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him." But at the sound of His well-known voice, calling her by name, *Mary*, she trembled, and looked up; and lifting her eyes to His face, she knew her Lord and Master, and fell prostrate at His feet, in that first moment of her joy.

Jesus said to her, "Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and to your God." . . .

A little time after this, three other holy women, Joanna, Mary the mother of St. James, and Salome, came to the sepulchre, bringing sweet spices, that they might finish the work of love they had commenced on the evening of Good Friday. Ignorant of what had passed, they were much troubled as to how they should be able to gain entrance to the tomb, because of the heavy stone which they had seen placed before it.

As they drew near they perceived, with no less astonishment than Magdalen, that the door was open and the stone lying near; and as they were afraid, an angel, sitting on the right side of the sepulchre, reassured them by these consoling words: "Fear not. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; He is risen; He is not here. Why seek you the living with the dead? Remember how He spoke unto you, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. But

go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you unto Galilee."

Then, remembering this prophecy, and full of holy awe, they turned and fled in silence. But, behold, even upon the road, they perceived their divine Master, who met them, saying, "All Hail!" And falling down before Him, and clinging to His feet, according to the Eastern custom, they adored Him. And Jesus said, "Fear not. Go, tell My brethren that they go into Galilee;—there shall they see Me." And He vanished out of their sight.

The Apostles and the disciples, to whom Magdalen and the holy women related all that had passed, refused to believe their words.

In the afternoon, on the day of the Resurrection, two disciples were going to a town named Emmaus, and were talking together on the coming of the Messiah, when Jesus, changed in appearance, drew near to them, and asked the subject of their conversation. "We are looking for our Master," they said, "the Salvation of Israel; but, behold, to-day is the third day, and nothing has happened." Then the Saviour answered, "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all the things which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?"

Then the divine Traveller revealed to His companions the mystery of the Scriptures, proving to them how clearly they pointed to Himself.

On reaching Emmaus, they entreated Him to stay with them and to partake of their repast; and Jesus, having taken the bread, blessed it, as on the night of the Last Supper, broke it, changed it into His own adorable Body, and gave communion to His two disciples. And immediately their eyes were opened, and they knew the Lord; but He vanished out of their sight.

And as they returned to Jerusalem, they said one to the other, "Was not our heart burning within us while He spoke to us on the way?"

The risen Jesus still desired by two clear and distinct manifestations of Himself to triumph completely over the incredulity of the Apostles, and the still more obstinate unbelief of Thomas.

One day when the disciples were gathered together, the doors being closed, He appeared, standing in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace be to you; it is I. Fear not." And He showed them His hands and His feet, where the stigmas of the redemption still remained. "Handle and see," added He, "that it is I Myself; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones. Have you here anything to eat?"

and when they had offered Him a broiled fish and a honeycomb, He ate before them, distributing among them the rest. And at last the Apostles, thoroughly convinced, fell down before the Son of God and adored Him; but even then He reproached them that they had been so slow to believe, saying to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead on the third day, and that penance and the remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." Then He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." How beautiful the harmony between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of sinful humanity, since it was even upon Easter Day that our God and Saviour instituted confession, and thus triumphed over the spiritual death of sin, by giving to all men the means of a spiritual resurrection.

Thomas, now returned to Jerusalem, was the only one who refused to believe so many witnesses. "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails," he said, "and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." Therefore, the eighth day after Easter, the Apostles, and this time Thomas with them, being gathered together in the upper chamber for prayer, and the doors being closed, Jesus stood suddenly in the midst of them, and turning to Thomas, He said, "Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands, and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing." The Apostle, now convinced, fell on his knees, exclaiming, in faith and repentance, "My Lord and my God!" Then, in tones of reproof, Jesus answered him, "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."

This, then, is the last link in the chain of evidence which attests the resurrection of our Lord, and it was, as St. Gregory remarks, for the confirmation of our faith that God permitted such marvellous unbelief. Could those who might refuse to believe the Apostles possibly refuse to accept the testimony of St. Thomas? Therefore Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, died upon the cross to expiate our sins and truly rose from the dead by His own power; therefore the Christian faith is divine and absolutely certain; therefore the Catholic Church, which brings to us this faith, is the mother of our souls and the harbor of salvation.

Let us have more faith than Thomas: let us believe without see-

ing, the truth affirmed by the Gospel, by the holy Apostles and martyrs; let us believe, love, and adore our risen Lord. "He who believes shall be saved; he who believes not shall be condemned."

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD.

FORTY days after Easter Our Lord appeared for the last time to His disciples, near to Jerusalem. The eleven Apostles, and more than five hundred disciples, were present. It was noonday when He appeared to them, and He led them to the Mount of Olives, and to a place of which the exact spot is still preserved in the tradition of the holy places.

"Behold," He said, "I send the promise of My Father upon you, and you shall be endued with power from on high." Then lifting up His hands to bless them, He added, "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature; and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

And even as our divine Lord was speaking to His Apostles this last solemn farewell, He rose in unspeakable majesty above all the prostrate crowd, and soon a bright cloud received Him out of their sight.

Since then, the glorified body of Jesus Christ has been in a supernatural and ineffable condition, of which nothing on earth could give us any idea. Although having a body truly human, He is invisible to our earthly eyes; our hands cannot touch Him, our senses cannot attain to Him. He deigns, in His great love, still to dwell among us by means of the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, where He is truly present, though veiled under the appearances of bread and wine.

Jesus waits for us in heaven; and those who serve Him faithfully, who hate sin, obey the Church, and frequent the Sacraments, have a sure and certain hope of meeting their Lord in heaven when their earthly pilgrimage is done. His glorious Ascension is the pledge of our own entrance into paradise. It is the last and most wonderful of those miracles by which He deigned to confirm our faith and to render us absolutely certain of the divine nature of the Christian religion. This Ascension, at the full noonday, in the clear daylight, in the presence of more than five hundred witnesses is a fact that it

is simply folly to deny. Those who incredulously reject it are forced to do violence to the most elementary rules of logic, of reason, and of good sense. Catholics rest their faith upon decisive reasons and upon the evidence of indisputable demonstrations, while the sceptical are reduced to an irrational denial of what they cannot possibly disprove; and, failing arguments, will invariably take refuge in senseless ridicule, angry invective, or pointless satire, which does but prove them conscious of the weakness of their cause and of the instability of the ground on which they stand. Thanks be to God, who has founded our faith and all our hopes upon no metaphysical reasoning, but upon simple facts which are open to the whole world—clear, unquestionable facts, on which the immediate and necessary consequence is the divinity of Jesus Christ, the infallibility of His Church, and the necessity for all men who desire to be saved to believe in God, in Jesus Christ, the true and living God, to obey the Pope and the bishops, and to practise religion just as it is taught them by the Pope and the bishops in the name of Jesus Christ and in the name of our Heavenly Father. Nothing could be more reasonable and provable than the Catholic faith, which rests upon the truth as upon an immovable rock. Let us guard it carefully in the midst of a world which blasphemes the faith it knows not. Let us guard it carefully from a danger greater still—from the contagious influence of careless, inconsistent Christians, who have not the constancy to remain faithful to the holy engagements of their baptism.

PENTECOST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BEFORE ascending into heaven, the Word Incarnate had promised to St. Peter and the Apostles that He would send to them the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, of holiness, of justice, and of love, to become the Soul of the Church.

He had, moreover, commanded them to wait at Jerusalem, in retreat and prayer, this miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost. In obedience to this, and in expectation of the fulfilment of this promise, St. Peter and the Apostles, with seventy-two disciples and the holy women, had withdrawn to the upper chamber, and there, grouped around the Blessed Virgin, mother and queen of the budding Church, they persevered in fasting and in prayer.

Thus nine days passed away. The tenth was the fiftieth after Easter, and was also the anniversary of the promulgation of the Decalogue by the Lord in the midst of the thunders of Mount Sinai. On

this tenth day, at about nine in the morning, the whole house trembled, and the room in which the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin were assembled was filled with a supernatural flame—a symbol of the Holy Spirit, of whom Mary was the living temple.

It descended upon each of the Apostles under the form of tongues of fire, penetrating and completely transforming them. At that moment they received both the plenitude of heavenly gifts and the fulfilment of all the promises of the Saviour; the Catholic Church received its confirmation and its divine mission; and it was then, according to the most ancient traditions, that St. Peter, the first Pope, surrounded by all his brethren, celebrated for the first time the divine sacrifice of the Mass.

Now all this was noised abroad throughout Jerusalem, and many thousands of Jews came in haste to Mount Sion. St. Peter, seeing this multitude, had pity on them, and going out with the Apostles, he began to preach to them the resurrection and divinity of Jesus Christ. And all the Apostles joined in glorifying the loving-kindness of the Saviour. Then it was that God worked a great miracle—the Apostles preached in one language only, and there were present there men out of every nation under heaven, who were quite unable to understand Hebrew, and yet all understood the Apostles, and every man believed that he heard them speak in his own tongue. By this God desired to teach that His Apostles were helped by Him, and also that the Church is the universal society of all people, and that, by means of the Church, all are united in the same faith, in the same truth, and in love for the same Lord.

Seeing this great wonder which none could deny, almost all present unhesitatingly adored the God of St. Peter and the Apostles, and they cried, "What shall we do?"

Then St. Peter instructed them briefly in the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption, prepared them for baptism, and, assisted by his brethren, he that day baptized nearly five thousand. The following Sunday three thousand more became Christians. This was the nucleus of that great and imperishable Catholic Society, which, from that time, has gradually extended over the whole world, teaching all the great nations of the earth to acknowledge Jesus as their King, and inculcating the lessons of holiness and peace, of devotion and charity, of purity of morals, and human respect; teaching, in one word, all that is great and true and noble upon earth.

The Holy Spirit is, I repeat, the soul of the Church. It is He who animates, sustains and protects it, who gives it life, and makes it

fruitful in all good works; it is He who brings destruction upon its enemies; it is He who maintains in the true faith and constantly assists the Pope, its infallible head.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and dwells in all fulness in the Sacred Heart of the Saviour as in a home of life and love. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as from the Father, and reaches the faithful only through the divine channel of the Heart of Jesus.

Our Lord, the invisible Head and Ruler of His Church, works only through the Holy Spirit, whom He sheds as a heavenly dew upon the souls of the faithful.

Thus it is the Holy Spirit who gives to the Sacraments all their virtue, to the Pope his infallibility, and to bishops and priests their sacred prerogatives.

It is the Holy Spirit who governs and directs the Church, sanctifies the saints, and strengthens the martyrs. It is the Holy Spirit who makes fruitful all Catholic institutions, and inspires all noble deeds.

Nothing exists, and nothing can exist, without the working of the Holy Spirit, since He is, with the Father and the Son, the only true and living God, Creator, and Lord of all things.

Fallen angels and sinful men drive Him from their hearts, where, with the Father and the Son, He ever desires to dwell. But the faithful children of God and of the Church guard themselves carefully as the temples of the Holy Ghost, knowing well that the indwelling spirit of their God is the most priceless possession, the source of all grace, and the germ of eternal happiness and glory.

Every year, fifty days after Easter, the Church, in remembrance of the Holy Ghost, solemnly celebrates the beautiful feast of Pentecost, which is, next to Easter and Christmas, the greatest of the year.

THE GOSPEL.

MANY speak of the Gospel without having any knowledge of it. Many have never read it; and some would even be troubled to explain clearly what it is.

Hence it follows that, on the subject of religion and Christianity, people believe just what they have been educated to believe; thus, in our days, as in the time of Luther and of Calvin, we may see thousands of unhappily misguided people who, deluded by false teachers, hate their brethren, and blaspheme the most sacred things, all in the name of the Gospel!

The Gospel is a book; it is the abridged history of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This sacred history was written by four eye-witnesses, or contemporaries of Jesus Christ. They wrote what they had seen with their own eyes, and had heard with their own ears. Two of them were among the number of the twelve Apostles: these were St. Matthew and St. John. The two others, St. Luke and St. Mark, were only companions and disciples of the Apostles, and wrote from their dictation.

There are then, properly speaking, four gospels, or histories of Jesus Christ. But they have all been written for one end—to teach men to know, love, and adore the Saviour, and therefore they are all united in one single volume called the Gospel, which means good news—news of salvation.

These four books were all inspired by the Holy Spirit, and written under His guidance. They relate the actions and the most important words of Jesus Christ. Each Gospel explains and develops another; the one is the supplement or completion of the other.

The first Gospel which was written is that of St. Matthew. It is called for this reason the Gospel according to St. Matthew. It was written at Jerusalem, about fifteen years after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

During those fifteen years, the Apostles, under the direction of St. Peter, the vicar of Jesus Christ and their supreme head, had preached the doctrines of their divine Master; they had made Him known to the world; they had related His miracles and repeated His sacred words; but they had written nothing. It was their teaching, and their teaching only, which had been for fifteen years the Christian's rule of faith. "Go," the Lord had said to them, "go, teach all nations; preach the Gospel to every creature; teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. He that heareth you, heareth Me; he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."

The ministry of the Apostles was therefore the ministry of speech. They preached and administered the sacraments; they baptized, they heard confessions, they confirmed, they ordained deacons, priests, and bishops, celebrated every day the sacrifice of the Eucharist, gave Holy Communion to the faithful, and extreme unction to the sick.

But the time came when it was necessary for them to disperse throughout the world to conquer the whole universe for God.

Before they separated, the Apostles, moved by the entreaties of the

converted Jews of Jerusalem, charged the Apostle St. Matthew to leave them in writing the principal teachings and most remarkable events of the Saviour's life, which this same Apostle had so often preached to them. This written history was to be for their consolation, and that they might hold it in still more faithful remembrance. St. Matthew wrote, therefore, the first history of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel of St. Matthew is written in Hebrew or Syriac, which was the common language of the Jews at that time. His principal endeavor was to prove, by the deeds and words of Jesus Christ, that He was the Messiah, the Redeemer expected by the Jews, the Son of God made man, and that He had in Himself fulfilled all the prophecies relating to the Messiah; that He had truly risen from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and had ascended into heaven, that where He is we might be also.

St. Mark, who wrote the second Gospel, was not one of the twelve apostles, but he was the disciple of the prince of the Apostles, St. Peter, his secretary and companion in his apostolic career. He followed him to Rome, and it was there that he wrote his Gospel, thus transmitting to writing, for the consolation of the faithful at Rome, an abridgment of all that his master, St. Peter, had preached to them.

This history of Jesus Christ, equally inspired by the Holy Spirit, was approved by the prince of the Apostles, and was circulated from thence throughout the Christian Church. It was written in Latin, the common language of the Romans at that time.

St. Mark was made a bishop by St. Peter. He evangelized Egypt and the north of Africa, and died a martyr.

St. Luke, the third historian of Jesus Christ, was a Greek. He was a physician and a painter. He was the friend and faithful companion of the great Apostle St. Paul, who had been taught, by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ, all the mysteries of Christianity. St. Luke wrote in Greek what St. Paul was preaching in Greece and Asia. His principal object was to rectify several facts, and much that was most important in the teaching of Jesus Christ which had been altered by ignorant or ill-intentioned men; for even in the time of the Apostles there were heretics—that is to say, people who would alter the Christian religion. It is for this reason, St. Luke himself says, that he begins from the very origin of Christianity. He speaks of the great forerunner of the Messiah, St. John the Baptist; he relates all the details of the Incarnation of the Son of God in the womb of Mary; he gives a clear account of the Annunciation of the angel to Mary at Nazareth; of the Holy Nativity at Bethlehem, and of the

earliest incidents of the Saviour's life. He consulted the Apostles and the disciples, and probably the Blessed Virgin herself, as he preached with St. Paul at Ephesus and at Jerusalem, where Mary was as the mother and counsellor of the budding Church.

St. Luke wrote, equally with St. Matthew and St. Mark, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who preserved the historians of Jesus Christ from all possibility of error.

And, lastly, the fourth Gospel was written by the Apostle St. John, the much-loved disciple of Jesus Christ, who alone, of all the Apostles, saw Jesus die upon the cross, who was given by Jesus when dying to Mary, to fill His vacant place and to watch over her.

An interval of nearly fifty years separates the three first Gospels from that of St. John. The Apostle was in Asia, at Ephesus, and was nearly a hundred years old. New and more vigorous heresies sprung up as the Apostles, one after another, died. St. John alone was living. It was in vain that the early Christians pointed out to these heretics how utterly their new doctrines were opposed to the teaching of the Apostles, recorded in the three Gospels, and preached by the bishops, their legitimate successors. These daring innovators did then exactly what Protestant theologians, face to face with the Church, do now; they distorted the meaning of the sacred words which were cited in opposition to them, and clung obstinately to their errors.

Then the faithful had recourse to the aged Apostle, who, when he had communed with God, commanded fasting and public prayer throughout the Church, in order to obtain the illumination of the Holy Spirit; then, after a long ecstasy, during which God revealed to him heavenly secrets, he wrote the first words of his Gospel—words that seemed drawn from the very bosom of the Eternal.

The Gospel of St. John was written in Greek, which was the language then spoken at Ephesus. It was, like the three earlier Gospels, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and breathed still more of the spirit of divine love.

St. John dwells most emphatically on the words and miracles of Jesus Christ, which clearly prove the divinity of the Word, and His perfect equality with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Such are the four authors of the history of Jesus Christ, which is the greatest, most sacred, and most authentic of all histories.

The Gospel is, with the Holy Eucharist, the most precious treasure of the Church. It is the manual of the faithful, the mirror of their lives, and the model which they should incessantly follow.

Let us never read those holy pages but with faith, reverence, and love; and with an earnest desire to become holier each day by conforming our lives more nearly to the life of Jesus Christ, our divine Master, and our great Example.

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

THE word Assumption means lifting up to heaven, carrying away from earth to heaven. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is the mystery of the happy death of the Mother of God, of her miraculous resurrection, and her assumption into heaven, where, being invested with the glory of her divine Son, she reigns forever, Queen of heaven and earth.

A poor and lowly virgin, Mary was born at Nazareth, four thousand years after the fall of Eve, and about fifteen years before the Incarnation of the Saviour. She lived at first in the temple at Jerusalem with holy women consecrated to God. Her life was passed in prayer, in work, and in innocence. Espoused to St. Joseph, her relation, and the descendant, like herself, of David, Abraham, and Noah, she and her betrothed husband both lived in perfect continence; both had taken a vow of perpetual virginity.

We have already related how the Angel Gabriel appeared to her at Nazareth. In a poor stable at Bethlehem, she brought into the world Jesus, her Son and her God.

She passed thirty years with Jesus and St. Joseph in prayer and poverty and daily work. The model of interior souls, Mary made no outward show; all her life, all her glory was hidden in Jesus Christ. She passed her days and nights in closest communion with Him; she listened to Him, she talked with Him, but, more than all, she loved Him. She followed Him during His three years of teaching, and she was with Him through all the phases of His dolorous Passion, even unto Calvary, where she received His last sigh.

Before His death, Jesus bequeathed her to St. John, His much-loved Apostle, as His dearest possession and most sacred heritage. "Behold thy mother," He said to St. John, and turned His dying eyes to Mary.

All true Christians, being themselves the well-beloved disciples of Jesus, were represented on Mount Calvary by St. John; and at that supreme moment they received the Blessed Virgin for their mother; and Mary loves them all as her adopted children, by reason of the love she bears to Jesus, who dwells within them.

Mary was the first, according to the Fathers, to whom the risen Jesus appeared. She followed Him to the Mount of Olives, where she watched Him ascend into heaven. Then she retired with the apostles to the upper chamber at Jerusalem, and ten days after the Holy Spirit, who already dwelt in all fulness in Mary, as in His most pure sanctuary, was poured forth with the splendor of the divine Majesty upon the first Pastors of the Church, to bestow on them all graces needful for their apostolic mission.

Thus Mary assisted, as Queen and Mother, in the foundation of the Church, in the first preaching of the prince of the Apostles, and in the first efforts made by the zealous disciples of her Son.

She followed St. John, her adopted son, to Ephesus, then returned with him to Jerusalem; and there, at the age of sixty-three, or some say of seventy-three years, the Virgin Mary, surrounded by Apostles whom the divine Providence had gathered together at Jerusalem, fell asleep in Jesus on August 15th, in the forty-eighth (or fifty-eighth) year of the Christian era.

Being the holiest of creatures, her soul entered immediately into the glory of heaven. Her sacred body was buried and laid in the sepulchre by St. Peter and the other Apostles with the most tender reverence and sorrow. They kept her raiment, and, among other things, her veil, of which many churches still possess some fragments, and of which a considerable portion is said to be at the Church of Chartres in France.

There is a sacred tradition that God had permitted the apostle St. Thomas to be absent at the death of Mary, in order that her glory might be more clearly manifested. Warned of this great event by a divine inspiration, St. Thomas hastened to Jerusalem, but he arrived too late; for three days her sacred body had rested in the grave. Deeply grieved, St. Thomas earnestly requested to be allowed to look once more upon the much-loved face of the Mother of his Saviour. The Apostles yielded to his prayers, and then, accompanied by a large gathering of the Christians of Jerusalem, they all went together to the sepulchre, singing hymns and psalms. They opened the tomb; but what were the surprise, admiration, and holy rejoicing of all present, when, instead of the body of Mary, they saw the linen clothes reverently folded, and the grave filled with flowers!

However this may be, the constant tradition of the Church teaches that the angels had been sent by Jesus to raise from the dead and bear to heaven the mortal remains of that most Holy

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

PRAYER

MOTHER of God, most holy Mary, how often by my sins have I merited hell! Ere now the judgment had gone forth against my first mortal sin, hadst not thou in thy tender pity stayed a while God's justice and then, softening my hard heart, drawn me on to take confidence in thee. And oh, how often in dangers which beset my steps, had I fallen, hadst not thou, loving Mother that thou art, preserved me by the graces which thou didst obtain for me. My Queen, what will thy pity and thy favor have availed for me, if I perish in the flames of hell? If ever I have not loved thee, now, after God, I love thee above all things. Ah! suffer not that I turn away from thee and from God, who through thee hath granted me so many mercies. Lady most worthy of all love, suffer not that I be doomed to hate and curse thee forever in hell. Couldst thou bear to see a servant whom thou lovest lost forever? O Mary, say not so. Say not that I shall be among the lost! yet lost am I assuredly if I abandon thee. But who can have the heart to leave thee? How can I ever forget the love which thou hast borne me? No, it is impossible for him to perish who hath recourse to thee, and who with loyal heart confides in thee. Leave me not to myself, my Mother, or I am lost. Let me ever have recourse to thee! Save me, my hope! save me from hell, and first from sin, which alone can cause my eternal ruin.

Hail Mary, three times.

The Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VII., by a decree of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, May 15, 1821, granted:

An Indulgence of Three Hundred Days, once a day, to those who, with at least contrite heart and devotion shall say this prayer, together with the *Salve Regina* three times.

A Plenary Indulgence, once a month to all who shall practise this devotion every day for a month, on any day when, being truly penitent, after confession and communion, they shall pray for some time for the intention of His Holiness.—*Raccolta, pp. 183, 188.*

HYMN

Cho.—

Angel troops in crowds descending,
With glad song and radiant mien,
Round the Virgin lowly bending,
Bear to heaven their glorious Queen.
Spirits bright the mansion filling,
Jewelled crown and palms they bear,
For the fairest flower of Jesse
Queen of Heaven they now declare.

Solo.—

Earth resigns her choicest treasure,
Yields to heaven its Mystic Rose;
In exile dreary long it blossomed,
Now in climes celestial blows.
Jesus comes in haste to meet her,
In a blaze of wondrous light;
Divine Son of Blessed Mother,
Glorious with the Godhead's might.

Solo.—Angel choirs, now rejoicing,
Sweet triumphant anthems sing;
Glad hosannas, loudly sounding,
Praise the Mother of their King.
Cho.—Angel troops, etc.

Virgin who had become their Queen by the glory of her divine maternity. For even as the mother of a king is infinitely above his servants, so Mary, the Mother of God, is infinitely above all saints and angels and archangels—above all the cherubim and seraphim of heaven. Immediately beneath Jesus Christ, she reigns with Him, and by Him, over all His creatures.

The Assumption is the crowing glory of the Mother of God. Christians celebrate it by a solemn festival. It is a day of joy, for it is the day on which the Queen of Christians died, and death to the Christian is not the gloomy end of all things, but the happy deliverance from the sorrows of life, the joyful entrance into the unutterable gladness, which on earth they could only hope for and desire. It is the day on which Mary triumphed over death; it is the day on which our Mother was eternally crowned. Happy shall we be if we are the true children of this most holy Mother; happy, if by a faithful following of Jesus Christ, we deserve that she should regard us as her children.

Let us ask her to bless us, to obtain for us a happy death, and to conduct us, after the sorrows of life, to that blessed country where she reigns with Jesus Christ throughout eternal ages.

THE CHURCH.

God is known to us through Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is known to us through the Church. The Church leads us to the Son of God our Saviour, and He leads us to God His Father. Without Jesus Christ there is no true God; without the Church there is no true Christianity.

By the term Church three distinct things may be understood, although these three are all expressed in the one word.

I. The great society of all reasonable creatures who know the one true God, and are in close relations with Him by means of religion, whether in heaven, on earth, or in purgatory. In this sense we are all members of the Church.

II. The government established by Jesus Christ to preserve His children in true faith, unity, peace, and holiness; in this sense the Church signifies the Pope and the bishops, assisted by such coadjutors as they themselves provide.

III. The material Temple, where the members of the Church meet upon certain days, under the direction of their legitimate pastors to honor God by public worship, and to receive religious in-

struction. But we are not now speaking of the Church from this third point of view.

The Church is, then, a great society, the family of God upon earth. The Father of this great and holy family is in heaven, and is God Himself, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who, by making Himself our Brother, has changed us from servants of God into His children.

Our Mother is the Blessed Virgin Mary; the Mother of Jesus our elder Brother.

Our Heavenly Father and our Brother, and also Mary our Mother await us in our true home in heaven. The Church is therefore the society of peace, unity, and happiness, both in time and in eternity.

To guide us safely in the path of happiness, Jesus Christ has given us in this world a visible father, to whom He has entrusted all the treasures of His mercy and His power. This father is the Pope, successor of St. Peter, vicar of Jesus Christ, pastor of the Christian people, doctor of the true faith, sovereign Pontiff, and bond of unity for all the faithful.

"Thou art Peter," said the Son of God to the first Pope, "and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven."

There is, consequently, only one true Church, established by Jesus Christ Himself—divine and imperishable—and this is the Church built upon St. Peter and his successors, the Catholic or universal Church, of which St. Peter and his successors are pastors and pontiffs, and whose centre is Rome, the city of St. Peter. There is only one Pope on earth, as there is only one Christ, as there is only one God, and only those who are obedient to him may feel assured that they belong to the great family of God.

In the pastoral charge of the Pope, Jesus Christ has associated bishops, just as He formerly associated the Apostles with St. Peter. When our bishops are Catholic—that is to say, united to the Pope by faith and obedience, we are as clearly bound to obey them as we are bound to obey the Pope and Jesus Christ Himself, since they are to us the representatives of God.

Beneath the Bishops, and subject to their direction, are the priests, who aid them in their holy ministry, and join in the great work of the salvation of souls, by preaching to the faithful the word of God.

administering to them the sacraments, and celebrating in their midst the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and other offices of public worship.

Such is the Church—the great and holy family of God, the ark of salvation, the peaceful and invincible army which wages warfare with the powers of hell, and marches on through all the centuries ever on, to the conquest of paradise.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

It is most needful to insist upon one great and fundamental truth, viz., the divinity of the Catholic Church. This is the name given to the great society of Christians, or disciples of Jesus Christ.

We have already seen that the only true religion is the Christian religion, so called because Jesus Christ is its Head, its Master, and its God.

During His life on earth, Jesus Christ chose twelve disciples, whom He called Apostles, which means simply envoys, and He appointed one among them, the Apostle St. Peter, to be their head, when He should Himself have left the earth. Hence it was to the Apostles, and especially to St. Peter, their supreme head, that He entrusted the care of religion. He invested them with His spiritual authority, commanded them to preach the Christian faith throughout the world, and to bring all men under His dominion; and He promised to them, and to their successors, His perpetual assistance even unto the end of the world.

In fulfilment of this promise, ten days after His ascension into heaven, He sent to them His Holy Spirit to remain with them and their successors throughout all ages; the Spirit of Truth, who preserves the pastors of the Christian people from all error in the teaching of the Faith; the Spirit of Holiness, who gives to them the means of becoming holy themselves, and of making all men holy, if obedient to their voice; the Spirit of wisdom and power, who preserves the work of Jesus Christ, and makes His Church triumphant over all the powers of earth and hell.

St. Peter and the Apostles, obedient to the command of Jesus Christ, dispersed over all the world, preaching the true religion All died martyrs; they were the first Catholic bishops, and in every country where they preached they consecrated bishops and priests, of whom Catholic bishops and priests are alone the actual successors

St. Peter was the first Bishop of Rome, at which city he was crucified, during the first persecution of the Christians, in the reign of

the Emperor Nero. The Bishop of Rome is the successor of St Peter, and the inheritor of the glorious promises of Jesus Christ. He is called the POPE, which means the Father of Christians.

The Pope is the Head of the Christian religion. Those who separate themselves from him must separate themselves at the same time from Jesus Christ. When he commands, it is Jesus Christ who commands; when he forbids and condemns, it is Jesus Christ who forbids and condemns.

It is the Pope alone who is the centre of unity for all the faithful; it is by means of his authority alone that their vast numbers form one only flock, one only family, one only Church! Further, there is but one true Church of Jesus Christ, and that is the Church which is governed by the Pope.

If any desire to know if they profess the one true faith, they have simply to ask themselves if they own, as the Head and their spiritual Father, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Catholic Church. For our Saviour desired to give to all a clear and simple test, by means of which they might have no doubt about the true religion.

Jesus Christ founded a Church, for He said *My* Church. And He founded only one Church, for He said My *Church*, and not My Churches.

And this one true Church of Jesus Christ, what is it? It is the Church which is founded on St. Peter and governed by St. Peter; it is the Catholic and Roman Church, of which the Pope, successor of St. Peter, is the head, the pastor, and the centre of unity. It is, therefore, only the Pope and the Catholic bishops to whom we must have recourse when we desire to learn all points of Christian doctrine. They alone have received from Jesus Christ power, and a divine mission to mankind. They alone are able, by the perpetual assistance of the Holy Ghost, to preserve the Christian doctrine pure and intact from error. All other men who intermeddle with religious teaching are nothing but intruders and sacrilegious usurpers. Such are all schismatic bishops and priests, and such the whole body of the Protestant clergy.

Priests themselves cannot preach the Christian faith except when they are sent by the bishops.

The Catholic Church is therefore composed of all Christians who are under the guidance of the Pope and the bishops, who profess the true religion, and, possessing it in all its purity, know and practise the law of God, and march on to the conquest of Paradise, where their risen and glorified Saviour awaits them. "No one can have

God for his Father who is not willing to have the Church for his mother"—the words of St. Cyprian, bishop and martyr, sixteen hundred years ago.

Let us then reverence the priests of the Church as the ambassadors of God; let us be ever ready to condemn the attacks directed against them by irreligious men; let us listen to their voice, and be obedient to their teaching; such was the command of Jesus Christ: "Go," said their divine Master to them, "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.

THERE is on earth a great army which attacks no one, which wounds no one, which kills no one, and yet it fights incessantly, and has marched unshaken during nineteen centuries against the same enemy, through the same perils, on to the same conquest. It is everywere, yet few people recognize its presence. It is a thousand times more numerous than the armies of the most powerful emperors, and it numbers more heroes in its ranks. It fights against far more fearful foes, and the cross of honor with which it rewards its bravest men is of immeasurably greater value than the decoration of the battlefield.

This army is the Catholic Church. Its great Leader and Commander, already crowned with glory, is Jesus Christ, who reigns in heaven. But its divine Leader has entrusted the entire command of His army upon earth to one man, who commands all the rest, and leads them on to victory. This is the Pope, successor of St. Peter, to whom the Son of God declared, that upon him the Church should be established, and the gates of hell should never prevail against it. God Himself has organized this great army, of which all Catholics form a part. And to those who are faithful to their standard the reward is nothing less than the happiness and the eternal rest of heaven. Nothing is more strange than the ignorance of many with regard to a subject which so closely concerns them. A Christian may not be ignorant of such things, any more than a soldier may be ignorant of the different grades of general, colonel, captain, sergeant, and soldier, in the hierarchy of the army.

Our leader, to whom we all, without exception, owe obedience, is the Pope. This cannot be too often repeated, or too strongly enforced. His spiritual power extends over the whole world. No one is excepted from the great rule of obedience; and cardinals, bishops

and priests are only distinguished from the whole body of the faithful, in their relations with regard to the Pope, by rendering him a more unquestioning submission and a deeper homage.

Such is the express will of the Son of God. Whoever separates himself from the Pope does, at the same time, separate himself from Jesus Christ.

Just as a general who is charged with the care of the whole army can only fulfil his duties when helped by other officers who, under his orders, command the different regiments of the army, even so the Pope is helped in his supreme charge by the bishops who, under his direction, watch over the different divisions of the Church. Each one of these divisions is called a diocese, and takes the name of the town in which the bishop resides; and these different dioceses, in their perfect union, form the Catholic Church.

Priests are the auxiliaries of the bishop, who, in his turn, confides to them different portions of the flock which he is bound to govern, teach, and sanctify. Thus each diocese is divided into many parishes, and the priest entrusted by the bishop with any division of the diocese is called the parish priest. All priests are not parish priests. Those who have not the charge of a parish are either assistant priests or are simply priests living beyond the limits of parochial administration, and exclusively occupied in study, prayer, and teaching the young, in giving missions, in hearing confessions, and in preaching the Word of God, thus exercising, under the close direction of the bishops, all the good works which have for their end the salvation of souls.

Bishops and priests have been, equally with the Pope, ordained by Our Saviour. He it is who has regulated their respective relations, and who has established that great and indissoluble bond of union which may be summed up in one word—obedience. The priest is bound to obey the bishop, as the bishop is bound to obey the Pope.

Just as in the army, the general in command has a staff of officers, who convey his orders to all inferior officers, so in the Church the Pope has about him an ecclesiastical staff composed of cardinals and Roman prelates, by whose help he governs the Church in all its details; for this reason, cardinals are above all the bishops and archbishops in the world. This cardinalate is as the radiation of the Papacy. A cardinal is the intimate adviser of the sovereign Pontiff, and thus participates in his supreme power. It is to the cardinals that the Pope confides the examination and direction of all that

relates to the general government of the Church; and thus they form around him an august senate always ready to assist with advice and most zealous support.

The Pope is always dressed in white; cardinals in red, which is called the Roman purple; archbishops, bishops, and other prelates in violet. All other ecclesiastics wear black.

These different degrees of the sacred authority of the Church should be ever regarded with the greatest respect. Whatever happens, and in spite of the plausible tone assumed by infidel writers, and in mischievous journals, all reasonable men should render a glad and ready obedience to the voice of the Pope, the bishop, and the priest; such obedience is ennobled by the fact that it is rendered unto Jesus Christ Himself, since the priests of His Church were fully invested with His sacred authority by the might of His own infallible words.

THE POPE.

THE first Pope, the first Vicar of Jesus Christ, was the Apostle St. Peter.

Who cannot recall the memorable passages of the Gospel in which Jesus Christ first promised and afterward conferred upon him the sovereignty of the universe? Our Lord was in Judea, in the country bordering upon the town of Cesarea. To try the faith of His disciples, He asked what men thought concerning Him. They answered, "Some believe that Thou art John the Baptist, others Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets risen from the dead." Jesus said to them, "But whom do you say that I am?" And immediately St. Peter, falling on his knees, exclaimed, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Then it was that the Saviour allowed to fall from His lips the words which have travelled down the centuries with such marvellous fertility, and which still shine resplendently at Rome, graven in gigantic characters above the tomb of the Apostle—"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

You have doubtless often heard this passage of the Gospel read,

but have you ever fully fathomed the depth and the strength of its meaning?

First of all, we see that it was God Himself who had inspired St. Peter, and had made known to him the truth of the faith.

"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven." St. Peter was already the elect of God the Father, and for this reason he became the elect of God the Son. "And I"—the Son of God made man, the Christ, the Messiah, to whom thou hast just rendered witness—"I say to thee." Jesus Christ to St. Peter! the Master to His disciple! God to His Pontiff! the Head of the Church, who has reigned in heaven since His ascension, to him whom He had chosen to be, in His name, and by His authority, the visible head of the Church upon earth. I say to thee, "That thou art Peter." I change thy natural name of Simon into a new and symbolical name. "And upon this rock," this living rock, as upon an immovable foundation, "I will build My Church," and the very strength and firmness of the foundation shall give to it so perfect a stability, and so mighty a power, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Thou shalt teach the truth to My Church, and for this reason it shall be infallible in faith; thou shalt guide it in the path which leads to a glorious eternity, and for this reason it shall be holy. I intrust My Church to thee; I have but one true Church, as a husband who has but one lawful wife. And by what clear and evident sign shall men recognize this one true Church, among the innumerable religious societies which lay claim to her glorious title? By one certain and distinctive mark; if she rest on thee; if thou thyself, and thou alone, art her foundation, strength, and centre of unity—her father, pastor, doctor, and pontiff. "Upon this rock I will build My Church." My kingdom shall be that in which thou shalt reign. My law shall be that which thou shalt teach. Whoever shall be with thee, shall be, for that reason alone, with Me, and whoever shall separate himself from thee, shall separate himself from Me, and from the life eternal.

The powers of hell shall not be able to prevail against the Church, since they shall be powerless against thee. Persecutions shall come, heresies, and revolutions. Fear not, I am with thee, and upon thee ever rests My Church, which shall endure unto the end of the world. Those who desire to break thee shall be broken against thee, since thou art the corner and foundation-stone, destined to become by My power the one centre of attraction to the whole moral world.

And the power that I will give thee shall be proportioned to the

glory conferred upon thee, and to the vast requirements of thy ministry: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind or loose upon earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven;" and thus thy voice shall be as the voice of heaven, and thy infallible dictums shall precede the dictums of the eternal truth. That which thou shalt bless, I will bless; that which thou shalt curse, I will curse. . . . Blessed is the man who is obedient to the voice of Peter!

Such is the true meaning of those scriptural words which have ever confounded, and shall eternally confound, the irrational rebellion of Protestants against the Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, which is governed by the Pope, the legitimate successor of St. Peter.

Before ascending into heaven the Son of God solemnly confirmed His promise, of which some might have imagined that St. Peter by his sin had forfeited the fulfilment. "Simon, lovest thou Me?" Jesus asked three times of His Apostle. "Yea, Lord," St. Peter three times answered; "yea, Thou knowest that I love Thee!" thus effacing by a triple protestation of love and devotion the triple denial of which he had been guilty. Then said Our Lord to him, "Feed My lambs—feed My sheep!" The lambs of Jesus Christ are Christians who are obedient to the voice of this good Shepherd; His sheep are the bishops and priests by whose God-given power and spiritual fatherhood all Christians must be born again—born to the life eternal, by means of baptism, the sacraments, and the teaching of the one true faith.

And thus St. Peter was solemnly appointed pastor of the universal Church by Jesus Christ before His ascension into heaven.

The Pope, Bishop of the city of Rome, of which St. Peter was the first bishop, is the successor of this great and holy Apostle.

Leo XIII., the present Bishop of Rome, descends by an uninterrupted line of pontiffs from the prince of the Apostles. St. Peter commands, teaches, and governs the Christian world by means of Leo XIII., or rather it is Jesus Christ Himself who dwells within him, in order to be in Him and by Him, the divine Head of his own Church. It is not the man whom Catholics revere in Leo XIII.; it is the Vicar of Jesus Christ; it is Jesus Christ Himself who covers him with His shadow, and endows him with a royal supremacy over His disciples.

The man in the Pope should be, and generally is, by the providence of God, worthy of esteem, by reason of his virtues; but even were he an utterly bad man, the divine majesty of his authority would remain uninjured; just as a father, who has a claim upon the

honor and obedience of his children because he is their father, although they may know that, as a man, he has been guilty of many blamable actions. There are two persons in the Pope: the Pope and the man—as a man, he is more or less estimable, according to the virtues that he possesses; as a Pope, he is always worthy of all our reverence, and has a right to our entire and unquestioning obedience. It is not the man, it is the Pope who is always guided by the Holy Ghost.

There have been two hundred and fifty-nine popes, from St. Peter to the time of our Holy Father Leo XIII. now reigning. Of this number more than eighty have either borne the palm of martyrdom, or have led lives of such eminent holiness that they are numbered among the saints. Scarcely two or three have soiled the chair of St. Peter by notorious vice. The greater part have been men eminent either for their capacity, their piety, or their benevolence. But it may safely be affirmed that not one among them has possessed more of the charm of virtue than our present Pontiff, Leo XIII.

The peace of God shines from his face. The well-known characteristics of his calm and equable nature are goodness and benevolence—a clear intellect, and a constant cheerfulness. His regular features, his eyes of an undefinable expression, and the calm dignity of his manner, are in him the visible signs and outward revelations of the beauty of holiness. He is at once the sovereign Pontiff and the good Father. It is a great happiness to receive the blessing of the Pope, and especially of such a Pope. It is a great happiness to be able to make a pilgrimage to Rome, and to see the successor of St. Peter celebrating the Holy Sacrifice upon the very tomb of the Apostle, and offering to the adoration of the faithful the hidden God of whom he is the Pontiff and the Vicar.*

WHICH IS THE TRUE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST?

Among the religious communities which all claim to be considered the true Church, it is of the highest importance to distinguish the one which speaks truly from the rest who are deceived.

Our Lord gives us in His Gospel an infallible means, a sure and evident sign by which we may recognize His Church. And is it not an historical fact, clear as the day, and quite beyond the reach of contradiction, that the one Catholic Apostolic Roman Church is founded upon St. Peter, the first Bishop of Rome, the first Pope?

* See "Infallibility of the Pope," vol. i., p. 315.

Therefore all other Churches, whatever they may be, are false Churches, which do not come from God, and do not lead to God, but are opposed to the Gospel, and have no right to say that they are in conformity with the divine institution.

Therefore every true-hearted and truth-loving man, who has the fear of God before his eyes, is bound by his conscience, so soon as he shall be convinced of error, to go out from that false Church, in which he has had the misfortune to be born, and enter, obedient to the voice which calls him, into the true fold of Jesus Christ, which is the Catholic Church. And if he has the happiness to be born a Catholic, he should thank God for it every day of his life, and should be ready to suffer all things, even death, rather than fail, under any circumstances, in obedience to the Pope.

Nothing is easier than to know if you belong to Jesus Christ and to His Church. You only need to know which Church has the Pope for its Head, and then to enter into this Church. It is a test which requires nothing but simple reason, and which is open to the whole world.

IN WHAT SENSE THE CHURCH IS HOLY.

The Church of Jesus Christ is holy—that is to say, she is the enemy of all evil, which is sin. Does that mean that all the members of the Church are holy—that all her pontiffs are impeccable? Certainly not. Man here on earth remains always man, viz., weak, inconstant, and more inclined to evil than to good. In what sense, then, is the Church holy? The Church is holy: 1. In the sense that her divine Founder and Master is holy. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Founder of the Church, and He is holiness itself. 2. In the sense that the first envoys of Christ were holy. St. Peter and the Apostles were the first fathers of the Catholic Church, which they preached and established throughout the world; our own Churches trace their origin to them, through an uninterrupted succession of bishops and pontiffs. And who can tell to what sublime heights of sanctity the Apostles reached who could all say with St. Paul, to those whom they converted, "Be imitators of us as we are of Jesus Christ." And these holy Apostles not only lived for God, but also died for Him, and have borne the martyr's palm. 3. The Church is holy in the sense that her doctrine is holy. All that is taught by the Catholic Church is good and true, and comes direct from God. 4. The Church is holy, because, by means of the sacraments, prayer,

and the true worship of God, she renders holy all men who gladly obey her.

The Church tends only to render us all truly holy, perfectly holy, each in our condition. If a Christian does evil, and leaves the path of holiness, it is because he disobeys the Church, and neglects the means of grace she freely offers him. The man who is constant, faithful to the religious direction of the Church, to habitual prayer, to very frequent communion, to Christian instruction, in devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and in all the exercises of Catholic piety, will infallibly and quickly become holy, and will love God and his neighbor with his whole heart. 5. The Church is holy, because she has produced in all centuries, and will ever produce, a glorious band of saints—a band of men, and women, and children, and pontiffs, and priests, who practise all Christian graces with Christian heroism, and who are to other men noble examples of purity and chastity and devotion, of prayer and strength and meekness, of humility and Christian abnegation. The saints are living samples of the finished work of that Church which has produced them—living witnesses to the holiness of the Mother who has borne them. 6. Lastly, the Church is holy in the significant sense that she condemns and rejects from her bosom all that is false, mean, unhallowed, and defiling. She is ever the first to disgrace and stigmatize the few false priests who from time to time renew the treachery of Judas, forget the holiness of their mission, and scandalize the world by some deplorable fall.

Would it be just to impute the crime of Judas to the holy and faithful Apostles of Christ, to St. John, to St. Peter, to St. Paul?

The heartfelt sorrow of the Church when one of her priests falls into sin, the terrible indignation with which she prohibits, expels, and excommunicates him if he persevere in evil, is the most evident proof of her holiness. The weapon which ignorance and unbelief uses against the Church is therefore precisely the one which defends her most victoriously against their perfidious attacks.

The Church is holy, and whoever listens to her voice either is holy, or will become holy.

ON MIRACLES.

Miracles are the crowning evidence of Jesus Christ and of His Church. A miracle is an indubitable sign of divinity. What is a miracle? Is such a thing possible? Have there ever been any real miracles. Why have they altogether ceased?

These are some of the questions so fluently propounded by people who flatter themselves that they are acquainted with religion, while they are in truth utterly ignorant of it. We will endeavor to answer their questions as briefly as possible, praying that God may deign to render our arguments effective.

I. A miracle is an outward and visible fact, which clearly surpasses the powers of nature. It is a fact so far above the power of man that he is conscientiously obliged to say to himself, The finger of God is there.

A miracle is the means which God uses to show forth His presence, and to manifest His intervention among men. It is an irrefragable proof, open to all, of the divinity of any doctrine. A man proclaims that he is sent from God; he teaches that the whole world should believe in him, that his doctrine is true, and that it comes from heaven. But in whatever age and in whatever country this claim is advanced, men will immediately ask the very question which the Jews asked of the Saviour, on the borders of the Lake of Tiberias, "What sign dost thou show unto us that we may believe?" and if this man is truly sent from God, still more if (like Jesus Christ) he is God Himself, He will answer by an undeniable proof: "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again! . . . The works which do give testimony of Me that the Father hath sent me. . . . Though you will not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

In a word, miracles are the characteristic sign, the inviolable and unmistakable seal which God affixes to His word, and by which He renders any counterfeit totally impossible.

II. "Are miracles possible?"

Is it necessary to answer such a question? It means simply, "Is God the Lord of the whole earth?" Cannot He who ordained and established the laws of nature momentarily arrest these laws, that He may do good to His own children? "This question, seriously treated, would be impious, if it were not absurd," said a celebrated unbeliever, Jean Jacques Rousseau; and any man who could answer such a question in the negative would truly deserve to be treated as insane. But what man has ever denied that God could do miracles?

III. "Have there ever been any real miracles?"

Undoubtedly, since the crucified Jesus, who requires from men the renunciation of all their dearest passions, has been adored for eighteen centuries throughout the length and breadth of the world. To

endeavor to explain the triumph and perpetuity of Christianity without the intervention of many great and wonderful works, is to ignore the very nature of the Christian religion, the nature of man, the history of both; it is a miracle of ignorance and infatuation. Can you possibly believe without doing violence to your reason that when Christianity first presented itself to the world, springing from the foot of the shameful cross, and exacting then, as it exacts now, the sacrifice of prejudice and passion, the sacrifice of worldly honor, goods, liberty, and life—can you believe that men did not simultaneously demand of its Author, "Prove to us that you come from God, by doing the works that God alone can do. Work miracles, or we will neither believe in the strange mysteries you announce, nor practise the hard precepts you command"? Jesus Christ has had His witnesses; and in what numbers, then, is it possible that millions of men, of all ages, of all conditions, in all countries, should have been willing to die the most frightful deaths without having demanded of this religion, for which they sacrificed themselves, an evident proof of its divinity?

"But there are pretended miracles," some will say; and this is only an additional proof that there are true ones. There must of necessity be good coinage there, where men try to circulate false. Why do they make false coinage? It is because they hope to pass it as genuine money. And how can they hope to do this, if in reality there is no genuine money, to which the spurious bears a resemblance? Thus false miracles have only been credited because they resembled the true, and they are, for this reason, a valuable witness to the reality of such.

"Why have miracles altogether ceased?"

The question is a curious one, for there are still miracles—many miracles. If people were only a little better acquainted with religious facts, they would know that saints are canonized at Rome in our time, as in all past ages, and none are canonized without a rigorous examination which authenticates at least five miracles worked by their intercession. In face of the extraordinary severity which rules this species of trial, and the well-known prudence of Rome, who shall dare to say that there are no more miracles? There are fewer miracles than at the commencement of Christianity—1st, Because the true end of miracles has been attained, namely, the conversion of the world, and the establishment of the Christian religion. 2d, because we have before our eyes to-day as striking and as miraculous a proof of the divinity of our faith as miracles themselves

could be to the early Christians. I mean the prophecies of the Gospel and their accomplishment in the world. The early Christians saw the miracles of Jesus Christ and of His Apostles, but they did not see the accomplishment of their prophecies. They were, nevertheless, obliged to believe in them firmly, because of the miracles they saw. Just as a miracle was a decisive proof to the first Christians, so is prophecy a decisive proof to us, who have clear evidence of the divine fact of its accomplishment.

And let us observe, in conclusion, that the evidence gathered from the fulfilment of the prophecies is perhaps still more decisive than that which is gathered from miracles, for this reason, that time adds to its force, day after day. For instance, the stability of the Seat of St. Peter, the preservation of the Jewish people, though cursed and scattered all over the world, are far more striking facts now than they could have been four or five hundred years ago. And how much more will this be the case four or five thousand years hence, if the world last so long (which is more than doubtful)?

Therefore, there are miracles, though fewer than formerly, because the occasion has greatly ceased; and they are sent no longer as an evidence of the truth, but are given as divine consolations. The miracle which fills the world is the Holy Catholic Church

TRUTH AND ERROR

THERE is but one true religion, as we have continually repeated. In all centuries the spirit of falsehood and error has raised up in opposition to this holy religion many contrary beliefs which are only human inventions. To all such we give the name of heresy, which means simply a false faith. All have one marked characteristic Man alone has been their originator, and they do not descend from the Apostles. Separated from the truth, which is nowhere to be found in its completeness but in the Catholic Church, these false religions endure for a time, then perish, having first ruined the souls of men, and brought forth the fruits of indifference and irreligion. In the midst of all the dissension and confusion which ever accompanies mistaken creeds, the ancient Church of God remains ever the same, teaching ever the same true doctrine, preaching ever the same pure morality, and producing ever in the hearts of her children the same sublime virtues. This difference need not cause astonishment; the work of God does not resemble the works of men, and Jesus Christ, the divine Founder of the Church, will not suffer it to be shaken.

Jesus Christ—God;—here lies the all-potent secret of the life of the Catholic Church. The absence of Jesus Christ—separation from God;—here lies the formidable secret of weakness and the ultimate downfall of every false religion.

Toward the end of the French Revolution, men began to feel once more the need of God, and many religious attempts preceded the re-establishment of the Catholic religion by the Emperor Napoleon in the year 1802. One of these useless attempts originated with a certain citizen named Laréveillère Lépeaux, who called his pretended religion the worship of the theophilanthropists, viz., of those who love both God and men. The poor man did not know that this worship was as old as the world, and that its true name was Christianity. Notwithstanding all his efforts, and the public influence he was able to command, as one of the members of the Directory, Laréveillère did not succeed. People laughed both at himself and his ceremonies; and there was much to laugh at. The disappointed founder was one day bewailing his want of success to his friend, M. de Talleyrand, whose answer was both sarcastic and profound. "What can you expect, my dear fellow?" he asked maliciously. "The desire to found a religion is not all that is required. Try to die on Friday, and to rise on Sunday, and you will see that that will succeed."

It is the same with all Protestant sects, and all Churches separated from Rome, as with theophilanthropism—"It does not succeed!" and never will succeed, because truth alone has the privilege of real success.

CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT.

In all Protestant countries, where the great mass of the people are cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church, it is consoling to reflect that, although prevented by ignorance from belonging to the body of the Church, they may yet belong unconsciously to the soul of the Church by living pure and holy lives in accordance with her teaching. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children; and thus it is that Protestants are separated from that Church which is truly the Church of their baptism, and, of by far the greater number of those who resist and condemn her influence and her teaching, it may be said with truth that "they know not what they do." Yet, let no one think for a moment that this sad division is therefore a matter of slight importance, and that it is possible, by unmeaning or by conciliating words, to span the mighty gulf which

separates truth from error; it is of the highest importance to know whether the Catholic who says yes is right or wrong when opposed to the Protestant who says no. Let us, then, briefly consider the chief points upon which they differ.

The Catholic Church presents itself to the world as the emissary of Our Lord Jesus Christ, commissioned by Him and solely commissioned to preach His religion through the whole earth—to preserve the faith entrusted to it, and to defend it against all errors—to interpret Christian revelation, and to make clear to all men what they must believe, practise, and avoid in order to save their souls. She presents herself as endowed with the assistance of the Holy Ghost, who sustains and preserves her in the accomplishment of her divine mission. Protestants, on the contrary declare that the Catholic Church has corrupted Christianity—that her doctrines are contrary to the gospel, and that her teaching is not from God; and thus they cry out with one voice against her, "Away, away! we will not have thee to reign over us!"

The Catholic Church proclaims and reveres in the Pope the successor of St. Peter. The Catholic's rule of faith is the infallible teaching of the Church—that is, of the Pope and the bishops. The Protestant refuses to acknowledge any doctor but himself—reading the Bible and interpreting it as he will. Hence, among Catholics, a fixed religious doctrine, which nothing can change—immovable as truth itself; and, among Protestants, such a variance in belief that each one can change his doctrine every day and every moment.

The Catholic adores in the Eucharist Jesus Christ Himself, who declared that He was really present there, and that the living bread which He would give to the world would be His own Body. Protestants see in the Eucharist but a symbol, a fragment of bread!

The Catholic venerates and invokes the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of his Saviour. The Protestant regards her with an unconquerable indifference, and entirely misapprehends the nature of the devotion that the Catholic feels to her.

It is asserted that Protestant belief is entirely founded upon the Bible, but it is an incontrovertible fact that one man may explain a passage in one sense, while another will explain it in a totally different sense. Men have been known to have sixteen wives at once, while they cited some passage in the Bible as their authority; others, still under pretext of the Word of God, have believed themselves bound to kill their children after their baptism, in order to send them to heaven; others, in great numbers, have become involved in such

extravagant and grotesque hallucinations that it is hard to conceive how they could have ever been credited. And hence, from a universal system of private judgment, in which there is no unity, arise divisions which lead on to ultimate downfall. "A house divided against itself cannot stand," said the divine Founder of the Christian Church.

And who can deny that unity, the very secret of strength, is to be found in the Catholic Church alone? Do we not see it ever immutable, ever peaceful in its strength, ever fruitful in holy works and saintly lives? . . . There alone may be found the realization of all the solemn promises given by Jesus Christ to His Church; there alone may be found, living and acting, that sacred authority which the Saviour established to lead the faithful in the way of salvation, when He said to His Apostles, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." A very clever Protestant has just become a Catholic, because of the words spoken to St. Peter alone. "Where can their realization be found," he asked, "except among Catholics?" They alone rest upon St. Peter, who continues to govern, teach, and rule the Church. Let us conclude these reflections by one important consideration. A devout and well-informed Catholic has never been known to become a Protestant in order to serve God better, while we see every day, and now more than ever, the most highly enlightened Protestants being led back to the Catholic faith by a profound study of religion, and an earnest desire to live holier lives. Still more, a good Catholic has never been known to become a Protestant when at the point of death; and Protestants have very often become Catholics at that supreme moment, when truth alone could influence so serious a decision.

This single fact should suffice to show upon which side is religious truth.

A FEW FURTHER REMARKS UPON PROTESTANTISM.

In order to be a Christian it is not sufficient simply to believe that Jesus Christ is God; it is also necessary to believe all that He has revealed to the world, and to practise His religion in the manner that He has Himself commanded. Jesus Christ, by sending His Apostles, proclaimed that all men were bound to listen to their teacht ing as though it were His own: they alone were commissioned to teach all nations the truths of Christianity, and whoever would no hear them was to be as a heathen unto them. It was the will of

Jesus Christ that Christians should have recourse to them, and to them alone, in all their spiritual needs, and it was for this purpose that He promised to His Apostles and to their successors unto the end of the world the assistance of the Holy Ghost; He clothed them with His own priestly character, that they might have power to sanctify their brethren by the preaching of the true faith, and by the administration of the sacraments, and especially that they might have power to forgive their sins, and to offer continually to God the most holy sacrifice of the Eucharist.

For this reason, those who truly desire to find Jesus Christ, to become children of God, members of His family and sheep in His fold, must go to those who alone were intrusted by the Saviour with all that relates to religion. He that despiseth them, despiseth Jesus Christ; he that rejects them, rejects the religion of Jesus Christ, the true faith, and the knowledge and service of God.

The only legitimate pastors of the flock of Jesus Christ are the bishops of the Catholic Church. Protestants who, unhappily for themselves, reject their authority, are like blind men who fly from the light.

"But," it is again said, "have they not the same Gospel as Catholics?" They have the letter but not the spirit; and the letter kills (as said the Apostle St. Paul); it is the spirit, the true meaning, which gives life. The letter of the Bible is the ruin of Protestants, as it was formerly the ruin of the Jews. Protestants reject, even as the Jews rejected, the sacred teaching of those whom God sends to explain the true meaning of the letter. The Jews rejected the teaching of the Son of God and His Apostles, and their stubbornness proved their ruin.

The Bible is nothing without the Church. The Church is the living and speaking institution founded by Jesus Christ to explain the Bible, to preserve, preach, defend, and practically apply the Christian revelation, of which the Holy Scriptures form a principal part. It is the Church, and the Church alone, who, in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ, can infallibly make known the divine inspiration of the Holy Bible; it is she alone who can unquestionably distinguish those books which are inspired from those which are not; it is she alone who can determine the true meaning of obscure or contested passages by the light of the same Holy Spirit, who inspired the books themselves; and lastly, it is from her that Protestants have received these writings. Without the Church, the Bible and the Gospel are nothing but a dead letter—merely words

The Bible is no longer the word of God, because it is no longer according to the mind of God. Every Protestant—every Protestant clergyman—interprets the sacred words according to the ever-changing tenor of his mind, and often forces them into a false subservience to his own unfounded opinions. This mode of interpretation, carried to an extreme, will even provide its adherents with a cloak for wrong doing, and enable them to say, By following my inclinations I am not only exempt from sin, but I am doing the will of God! This subject recalls to us the slightly stinging answer made by a good and holy prelate (Monsignor de Cheverus, Archbishop of Bordeaux) to a Protestant clergyman who had engaged in a discussion with him, and had cited in opposition to his remarks a number of texts from the Bible—texts both misunderstood and misapplied, and having, besides, no possible connection with each other.

"Is it not written in the Gospel, my dear sir," said the prelate calmly, when the minister had ended his quotations—"is it not written that Judas hanged himself?" "Certainly," answered the minister, slightly surprised. "And is it not also written, 'Go, and do thou in like manner?' Why, then, have you not yet hanged yourself?" The minister retired from the conflict, ensnared and much confused.

Thus it follows that by constantly applying the Bible illogically, unconnectedly, and according to fancy, men are able to gather from the most sublime of books the most absurd and dangerous ideas. For this reason, a living and infallible interpreter is needed too explain this book, just as a judge and a tribunal are needed to expound and declare a law. This interpreter is the Catholic Church.

ANGELS AND SAINTS.

We are here on earth only that we may hereafter attain to heaven. There is no exception to this rule, and whoever fails to reach heaven is eternally lost—eternally condemned to the flames of hell. The irreligious and the unbelieving may say what they will; the fact remains the same, and no words of theirs will alter it.

This present life is the time for work; the future life is the time of rest and reward. Those who have already gained this rest and this reward are angels and saints. The angels are pure spirits, who at the moment of their creation, in the beginning of time, adored Jesus Christ, incarnate upon earth, and revealed to them by God from afar, and thus merited by this act of faith, submission, and

ST. CATHARINE OF SIENNA.

Golden Words from St. Catherine of Siena

On Obedience and the Service of God

" H! how sweet and glorious is the virtue of obedience, by which all other virtues exist, because it is the offspring of charity! On it is founded the rock of faith: it is a queen, whom he that espouses is rich in every kind of good and whom no evil can assail."

"The martyrs desired death, not to fly labor, but to attain their end. And why did they not fear death, from which man naturally so shrinks? Because they had vanquished the natural love of their own bodies by divine and supernatural love. . . . How can man regret to lose that which he despises? Nay, rather he desires to give his life for God, who is his life, and to shed his blood for love of the blood which was shed for him."

On Patience and Christian Hope

All other virtues may sometimes appear perfect when they are not so. Thou, O Patience! art the mirror of the soul, the essence of charity, and thou showest whether other virtues are living and perfect. When thou art absent we see other virtues to be imperfect, and that they are not nourished and fed at the table of the Holy Cross."

"O Hope! sweet sister of Faith! 'tis thou that with the key of the blood dost open the portals of life eternal. Thou guardest the city of the soul against the enemy of confusion; thou slackest not thy steps when the demon would seek to trouble the soul with the thoughts of her sins, and so cast her into despair; but, generously pressing on in the path of virtue and putting in the balance the price of the blood, thou placest the crown of victory on the brow of perseverance!"—*Compiled by a Parish Priest.*

On Discouragement and Despondency

"Let the trouble of your soul be destroyed in the hope of the precious blood. True self-knowledge by humbling you will increase light. Is not God more ready to pardon than we to offend? Is not He our Physician, and are we not His sick children? Has he not borne our iniquities, and is not sadness the worst of our faults?

"Discouragement is a leprosy which dries up alike both soul and body. It chains the arms of holy desire, and prevents our doing what we would. It renders the soul insupportable to itself and agitates it with a thousand phantoms. It takes away all light, natural and supernatural, and so the soul falls into a thousand infidelities, not knowing the end for which God created her—that He created her, namely, to give her life eternal!

humility all the glory and the blessedness of paradise. At their head is the great archangel or seraphim, St. Michael, the Archangel Gabriel, and the Archangel Raphael, whose sacred names are all mentioned in the Holy Scriptures.

All those who among the angelic spirits were not willing to believe in Jesus Christ, and to accept as their true God the Son of Mary, were instantly condemned, and are called devils or demons. The chief among them is named Lucifer or Satan.

The holy angels are in heaven—that is to say, they enjoy, in the bosom of God, and in union with the Lord Jesus Chirst, a beatitude which no creature can at all comprehend, seeing God face to face, fully participating in His infinite blessedness, and bathed in the infinite ocean of the joy and the peace, the light and the life of the Holy Ghost. They are lost in the fulness of infinite and immeasurable love; and by one single act of love which never ends, and of which we cannot, here below, even comprehend the perfection and the rapture, they adore the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; they praise Him, and bless Him through Jesus Christ, who is their heavenly King, and the principle of their happiness.

The number of the angels is incalculable. There are seven principal, as we learn from the Archangel Raphael when he revealed himself to his dear Tobias—"I am," he said, "the Angel Raphael, one of seven who stand before the throne of God." The "throne of God" is the sacred humanity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, present in heaven, and also upon earth in the Blessed Sacrament, and which these seven great archangels, princes of the heavenly army, continually adore. These same seven archangels preside over the six days of creation and the seventh, which is the day of grace; over the six days of the week and the Sunday; over the seven sacraments of the Church; over the diffusion among men of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost; and lastly, over the seven great epochs of the life of the world, from the creation of Adam until the final judgment.

The angels are divided into nine choirs and into three great orders, which we call hierarchies (viz., holy powers). To each of these choirs belong special attributes, which it would take too long to enumerate here; but it is very consoling to know that all, without any exception, for such is the express teaching of the Gospel, are employed in the great work of our salvation. "Are they not all ministering spirits," said St. Paul, "sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" In this sense, we are more than the angels, since they are for us, and we are not for

them. Oh, how noble a work of God is the baptized Christian in whom Jesus Christ constantly dwells, and who is thus helped and served and loved by the angels. Among these holy angels, who are all our friends and ministering spirits, there is, however, one whom we should more especially love, because in the day of our baptism, and in other still more solemn circumstances of our life, he is given to us as our special protector, guide, defender, and friend. He it is whom we call our angel-guardian.

All lawful superiors, whether spiritual or temporal, receive from God, who has thus raised them in dignity above other men, angel-guardians of a superior hierarchy, who assist them more efficaciously. Thus the most sacred humanity of the Saviour, and thus the Holy Virgin, Mother and tabernacle of God, had as guardians and assistants the seven great seraphims of who we have been speaking. There is every reason to believe that Adam in the terrestrial paradise, and afterward Abel, and Seth, and each of the five patriarchs who were with Noah, Abraham, David, Mary, and Joseph, ancestors of the Saviour, had as their angel guardian the most holy Archangel Michael, prince of the angels, and that this same seraphim is still the angel-guardian of each sovereign Pontiff, Head of the Church upon earth, even from St. Peter until the last Pope who shall govern the Church at the second coming of Our Lord; also that bishops and Christian kings have as guardians celestial spirits, high in dignity; the same may be said, in a more carefully guarded degree, of priests and of superiors in general. Each diocese and each empire has for its angel-guardian one of the princes of the heavens; each parish, each church has equally its angel; even the graves which receive our mortal bodies have their protector and celestial guardians, as the Church declares in her liturgy.

The saints are men who, during their pilgrimage in this world, so faithfully corresponded to the graces of Jesus Christ, to the teaching of His Church, and to the assistance of the holy angels, that after their death they have obtained the mercy of God, and have taken their place, each according to his merits and degree of holiness, in the glorious hierarchies of paradise.

Thus there are in heaven saints who are superior to many of the angels in glory, happiness, perfection, and power. Thus the Blessed Virgin, though a simple woman, and a human creature, is so far above all cherubim and seraphim that she alone constitutes in heaven an Order—a separate hierarchy.

Among the saints of the Old Testament, Abraham, the great ser-

vant of God, Moses, David, and St. John the Baptist must possess in the courts of heaven a most exalted dignity; and among the saints of the New, who could say to what an incomparable height of glory a St. Joseph, a St. Peter, a St. Paul, and a St. John have attained? and, in times nearer to our own, a St. Benedict, a St. Francis of Assisi, a St. Dominic, a St. Catherine of Sienna, a St. Theresa, a St. Ignatius, a St. Charles Borromeo, a St. Francis of Sales? Ah! how great our happiness to see these shining stars, these glorious saints whom we have loved and reverenced on earth, in that day when we ourselves shall enter heaven to take a lowly place among the saints. How great the love that they will have for us, that we shall have for them, in paradise. Let us then strive, while we have still the power to merit, to labor constantly for our own sanctification, and never to wander from the narrow way which leads to heaven.

Let us advance in the practice of all Christian virtues, remembering that in this road we must either go forward or go back; let us advance in the spirit of faith, in the constant recollection of the presence of God, in constant union with Jesus our dear Saviour, who reposes in the faithful heart, in a courageous practice of penance, prayer, detachment, humility, and gentleness of work, and patience and obedience and chastity; let us very often approach the sacraments of penance and the Holy Eucharist; and living in the sight of God, and under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, let us be true and fervent Christians upon earth, that we may be hereafter saints in heaven.

The feast of All Saints, which is celebrated on the first of November, is intended to recall to our minds what awaits us after life, to induce us to celebrate with holy joy the victories and the blessedness of the saints, to cause us to invoke them with greater earnestness, and to draw down upon us by these means, through their powerful intercession, very abundant graces and special benedictions. This festival also enables us to honor and venerate with religious rites that innumerable multitude of holy souls who are in heaven, but who are not canonized by the Church—that is to say, who have not been officially declared holy by the supreme authority of the Pope, and who (but for this beautiful feast of All Saints) would not receive from the Church upon earth that honor to which they have a right.

All Saints will be one day *our* festival—yes, even ours, though saints of lowliest degree, who are not canonizable, and who never will be canonized.

THE SOULS IN PURGATORY.

On the 2d of November the Church celebrates a feast which is at the same time most solemn and most touching. This is the commemoration (or remembrance) of the faithful departed.

This feast does not concern the souls of all those who have gone before us on this earth. Many are already in the enjoyment of the eternal rest of heaven, and their feast is celebrated the day before, on November 1st, the day of All Saints. These are the souls of those who, when their earthly probation was over, were found in a state of grace at the moment of death, and also of those whose purification from sin in the flames of purgatory is already ended. These holy souls have no further need of our suffrages. They can only receive our homage and our prayers; they have for ever entered into joy and into perfect gladness. . . .

There are other souls, alas! and in great numbers, with whom this sacred commemoration has no connection: these are the souls of those who are eternally and irrevocably condemned to the torments of hell because they rejected God, and separated themselves from His love, during that time when they were able to choose between good and evil, between the love of God and the love of sin. There is no feast, there are no prayers for them, neither in the Church which is still militant on earth, nor in the Church which already reigns in heaven. For them there is nothing but an eternal remorse, an eternal despair, an eternal void, nothing but these eternally revenging flames, which devour without consuming—those flames of which Jesus Christ speaks so often in His Gospel as the certain doom of sinners. "They shall be cast," He says, "into everlasting fire, into the fire which is not extinguished, where the victims shall be salted with fire [that is to say, preserved and yet penetrated], and where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. . . ."

The feast of All Souls relates, therefore, to the souls in purgatory alone. Purgatory is a state of suffering in which those souls who were found at the time of death in a state of grace, but who had not sufficiently expiated their sins by repentance, are perfectly purified that they may be worthy to appear among the saints.

Purgatory is that formidable future in which we are destined to pay all that we owe to divine justice. Purgatory presents the darkness and the desolation, the grief and the remorse of hell. There is the same terrible fire, there are the same torments; everything is

the same save despair and eternity. The same fire torments the lost souls in hell and the penitent souls in purgatory; and St. Augustine, summing up the tradition of the Church of the first four centuries, says, that "the same fire which consumes the chaff [viz., the reprobate] refines the gold," viz., those just souls who have left this world without having done penance in sufficient proportion to the number and gravity of their sins.

Therefore they burn, these afflicted souls; they burn in an actual although a supernatural fire, in a fire which has as complete access to the undying spirit as the fires of earth to the human body. The justice of God gives to this cleansing fire an activity which we cannot conceive, and of which the intense ardor of the fire that acts upon our senses is but a feeble symbol.

These souls are in outer darkness, like the souls of the lost. They know not the time when their expiation will be ended. . . . Perhaps not for twenty years—a hundred years! perhaps not until the end of the world! . . . Terrible perhaps! how greatly it must add to the pain of this punishment! but also how clearly it should cause us to realize the greatness and the enormity of sin, even of trivial, venial sin, since the God of everlasting love exacts for it from the creatures who love Him, and whom He Himself loves, so terrible a punishment.

But the greatest suffering of the souls in purgatory lies in their separation from God, from Jesus, their much-beloved Saviour. Here on earth the desire and love of the supreme good, the aspiration of the soul to God, its only, last, and infinitely lovely end, are incessantly weakened, counteracted, and sometimes even extinguished by the cares of life; but after death the Christian soul, plunged into purgatory, disengaged from the body, disentangled from all creatures which obscured its vision, aspires to God alone, desiring nothing beyond the one immeasurable good, now become the sole object of its love. It has one only impulse, and tends alone to God. But, by reason of the lingering stains of sin, this unhappy soul, repulsed from the sole object of its love, still languishes in grief and desolation. It is assured that it will one day possess this infinite good which it desires with all its strength, and it is this future happiness which causes its actual suffering. Such are the souls in purgatory; such are the souls of many of those whom we have loved, and who have loved us on earth—our father, mother, brothers, sisters, and our best-loved friends. . . . Shall we forsake them when we can help to deliver them from such suffering? Shall we be deaf to their

prayers and indifferent to their tears? They call to us from out the abyss of pain, "My child, my father, my friend—oh! thou whom I have loved so much, and who, in days gone by, returned me love for love, wilt thou so soon forget me, and withhold the prayers which would hasten my deliverance from this pain?"

Hard indeed must be the heart which can resist this cry. We will listen to their prayers. We will hasten to their aid. Let us hear the merciful voice of the Church, our mother, teaching us that we are able and are bound to help them by our prayers, by our good works, by our alms, and by our penances, but especially by the oblation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for their eternal repose. God our Father and theirs deigns to apply to them, and to pass on to their account, all the expiatory merits of these holy works.

Lastly, a very powerful means for the deliverance of the suffering souls in purgatory lies in the indulgences which we may gain for their intention, and which we are authorized by the Church to apply to their relief.

There are most powerful motives to urge us to pray thus for the dead: 1st, If we forget them, God, by a just judgment, will permit that we shall be forgotten by them in our turn, and no one will pray for us after death. 2d, There are among them a great number to whom we have been united by the bonds of blood and friendship. We must not cease to show them love if we would prove our gratitude. 3d, If we are so happy as to accomplish their deliverance they never forget so great a benefit, and will become our most fervent intercessors near to Jesus Christ. Perhaps it will be through their prayers we shall be saved. Let us pray much—and often for the souls in purgatory.

Let us often have the Holy Sacrifice offered for their deliverance. It is the best possible alms. Let us every day apply to them some indulgence.

The following are some of the simplest prayers to say, and have been enriched by the sovereign pontiffs with indulgences applicable to the souls in purgatory.

1. Seven years and seven quarantines (of days) to all who recite with devotion the three acts of faith, hope, and charity.

2. Three hundred days' indulgence for reciting the Litany of the Blessed Virgin.

3. Idem, for the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus.

4. Idem, for the prayer: Remember, O most holy pious Virgin Mary, etc.; or, Memorare, etc.

5. For chaplets enriched by indulgences (viz., those of St. Bridget), a hundred days' indulgence for each Pater and Ave, and a plenary indulgence once a month, and on all the great feasts of the year, for the faithful who recite these chaplets every day.

6. One year, each time, for kissing a crucifix that has been blessed.

THE JUDGMENT.

We are all eager to know the future. It is this common desire which has given rise to so many ignorant abuses, to a foolish belief in sorcerers, fortune-tellers, spiritualists, and other impostors of this description, who laugh at the credulous people who consult them, who take their money, and do not tell them what they desire to know, for the simple reason that they are quite incapable of doing so. God alone knows the future; that which will be is ever present to His infinite knowledge, even as that which has been, and that which is; and if we know for certain any single fact of our hereafter, it is only because God Himself has deigned to make it clear.

God has been pleased to reveal to us something of this hidden future, not to satisfy our vain curiosity, but to incite us to do right, to avoid sin, and to embrace with faith and fortitude the painful sacrifices which an unfaltering obedience to the divine law will often and necessarily impose upon us.

Of all these revealed truths, the most impressive, the one which does and which should affect us the most deeply, is undoubtedly the prediction of the Last Judgment.

We shall all be judged; nothing is more certain; it is God Himself, it is Jesus Christ Our Lord become man for our salvation, who has unmistakably declared it; and He has not merely declared that the world would be judged, that this judgment would be for all, and that it would be fearful and terrible, but He has deigned to give a minute description which should serve to stamp its reality more forcibly upon the mind. He it is who said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but My words shall not pass away. I am the truth. He that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Nothing, therefore, is more certain than that Jesus Christ the Son of God clearly foretold the judgment.

In the twenty-fifth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, Our Lord, after He had portrayed the signs which were to be the forerunners of the second Advent (pestilence, wars, the confusion of the elements, the frightful overthrow of nature, the ravages of Anti-

christ, and the terrible struggles of His Church against the wicked), went on to describe how the clouds of heaven should be rent asunder, and how He Himself should come in all the glory of His majesty to judge the world.

All men then living shall be struck with death; but in a little time, at the supernatural sound of the trump of the Archangel, they shall rise from the dead with all the human generations which have passed from the earth since Adam and Eve, even to the last day. All shall rise again with their bodies of flesh and bone; the souls shall be reunited to the bodies which they formerly animated. The omnipotence of Him who brought all things forth from nothing shall allot to each human body which He calls from the dust of the grave that soul which was its former inhabitant. Then, gathered together before the tribunal of their divine Judge, men shall submit to their eternal sentence; to the just, a sentence of eternal life, to eternal happiness, of everlasting joy; to the wicked, a sentence of eternal despair, of hopeless malediction, of undying pain, and everlasting retribution. At a sign from the Son of God, the angels, clothed with visible forms, shall separate this immense gathering of all the nations into two great divisions; one shall be on the right hand of Jesus Christ, and the other on the left. And then the eternal King shall pronounce this twofold sentence, "*Venite: benedicti Patris Mei, possidete paratum vobis regnum a constitutione mundi*"—"Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And the elect, to whom this heavenly invitation shall be given, shall enter immediately with the holy angels into the ineffable joy of their Lord.

Then the King shall turn to that other division of this vast human assembly, which, gathered on His left hand, still awaits the inexorable sentence: "*Recedite a Me, maledicti, in ignem æternum*"—"Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." "And these," says the holy Gospel, "shall go at once into everlasting punishment." As the sudden falling of a thunderbolt shall be the utterance of this sentence to the miserable beings whom it shall strike and overwhelm. "Lord! banished from thy presence, Lord! banished from thee! Thou who art the Life, the Light, and the one eternal Good! and where, then, shall we go, where wilt Thou send us, Lord, and where shall we find refuge?" *In ignem.*—In fire, in everlasting fire. *In ignem æternum.*—In flames that shall never be quenched. In fires that shall never grow cold! Never! For ever! Alas, this dwelling-place! Alas, this terrible futurity!

But now no power can save them from the hands of divine Justice. The time of mercy is for ever passed; nothing more remains but Justice—inflexible, immutable, and divine.

"If men only knew the judgments of God," said a holy hermit, when dying at the end of twelve years spent in sanctifying and incessant meditation on the divine judgments—"if men only knew the judgments of God, they would never sin!" Why do we not think of this salutary truth? It could not fail to transform our lives; and however negligent we may be, or perhaps even wicked and worthless, it would change us into true and earnest Christians, into men ruled by the golden principles of duty, faith, and conscience.

Sometimes we say, "It is too hard; I cannot." But can we live in a devouring fire, and dwell in everlasting burning? Ah! how clearly we shall then see that we could have done the right; and that for the work we deemed so hard we needed nothing but a little courage and a little resolution. But then the time will be forever lost. Men die but once, and the judgment which follows after death is beyond appeal.

And how do we now defend ourselves? "I have no time to pray—I cannot find time to go to confession—I do not like to present myself at the holy altar before the eyes of men"—all miserable delusions paving the way to eternal ruin. Delay no longer, but return at once to God, and embrace a holy Christian life. Believe me, there is no time to hesitate. Use well the fleeting hours which separate you from judgment. You cannot tell how few they may be. Prepare yourself by the practice of fervent prayer, by frequenting the sacraments, by hallowing the Sunday, by striving earnestly to do in all things the perfect will of God. Prepare yourself thus for a favorable sentence, and pray, I entreat you, to our heavenly Father, that neither you nor I, nor any that we love, may have one day to hear those terrible words which shall shake the whole earth: "*Discedite a Me, maledicti, in ignem æternum*"—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!"

LIFE ETERNAL.

THE Credo concludes with one short sentence, which is most profound, but is unfortunately very little understood. After having spoken of God, of the Trinity, of the divine Persons, of the mystery of creation, of Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, of the Church, which unfolds to the whole world the mysteries of Redemp

tion, the Apostles added to the Credo the words, "I believe in the life everlasting;" and with these they have concluded. And there is, in truth, nothing beyond; and it is on this mysterious eternity that we must for a moment reflect.

We are accustomed to speak of the moment in which the human life of man draws to its close, consigning him to an immortal life in the bosom of God as his last end. Death—judgment—purgatory—a glorious eternity in paradise—a fearful eternity in hell: these are the grand realities which confront us when we speak of our last end.

There is no necessity for declaring that life ends with death. But what is death? what happens then? what is this terrible change? This soul, which only a few instants ago made use of all the organs of the body—to think, to see, to hear, to act—what is it doing? where is it gone? and if it is still living in some world into which we cannot penetrate, what is its fate, and what the destiny that awaits it? Great questions which religion alone can answer truly, because the God of eternity, Jesus Christ Our Lord, has revealed its hidden secrets.

Our life on earth is but a short and transitory preparation for the life everlasting. Death is the end of the journey. When we have arrived at the end of our probation, our Creator examines the manner in which we have passed it, and, in His infinite justice, He renders to each according to his works. He casts out of His presence those who have had no desire for His love; and He gives Himself, with the infinite treasure of His perfect holiness and happiness, to all who have loved and served Him faithfully, and who, while still on earth, lived in and with Him. At the moment of death, our soul will lose its power over our body, and turning to God, who dwells concealed within it, it will enter upon eternity in a changed and unalterable condition of either life or death, happiness or misery, holiness or damnation. An unalterable condition, because the soul has now no chance of changing; it can no longer, as on earth, turn from evil to good, or from good to evil, because to effect this change time is absolutely necessary, and in eternity time is not, nor any succession of moments. In this world, moments succeed to moments; and if we can pass from a state of sin to a state of grace, or from a state of grace to a state of sin, it is only because we have time to change. In eternity this is no longer the case; it is a different life, a different method of existence, which has no manner of resemblance to our life on earth; it is an entirely indivisible life without any succession of instants—a life similar to the life of God, for whom there is neither

past nor future, but one eternal, immutable, and perfect present, which passes human comprehension. In heaven, the life of the just is one eternal act of love and infinite beatitude; in hell, the life of the lost is one eternal and immutable act of malediction, fury, and despair. It is absolutely contrary to the very nature of eternity, good or evil, that it could change, whatever it may be; and for this reason, the happiness of heaven is an eternal happiness, and the damnation of hell an eternal damnation. And those who refuse to believe in eternal punishment argue falsely, and fail to grasp the true and inherent meaning of the words they use.

If at the moment of death our soul is united by love to God, through the grace of Jesus Christ—if it is in a state of grace, thus forever it must remain, and will consequently retain the possession of God, and of infinite happiness unto all eternity. If, on the contrary, which God forbid, it should be in a state of sin, separated from the love of Jesus Christ, and in fellowship with Satan, it must forever remain in separation from God, and necessarily in eternal separation from life and light, from happiness and holiness; it must remain under the power of Satan, since it has surrendered itself to him, and it must sink down with him into that unutterable darkness, that eternally living death (that avenging, immutable, and burning abyss of the infinite justice of God, that nameless and immeasurable malediction), which we call hell!

Between hell and paradise there is no middle way. Each one of us must be either saved or lost. If we are saved, we shall be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, and by our own co-operation with that grace; if we are lost, we shall be lost, in spite of all the efforts of God's love, by our wilful resistance to that love, and through our own fault.

Purgatory is a transitory expiation and enforced penance for those sins which the elect have not sufficiently expiated by a voluntary penance while on earth. Purgatory is, like hell, a state of remorse and suffering; but purgatory is only a temporal punishment, while hell is an eternal punishment.

But as regards heaven or paradise, no human tongue can even tell its secrets. It is the communication of the eternally glorious life of God, of His ineffable light, His immeasurable love, and His infinite beatitude, granted to the Christian for the sake of Jesus Christ Our Lord.

O God! how glorious the destiny that opens out before us. How foolish it is to think so little of the life beyond the grave; how gladly we should submit to all earthly trials if our faith were but more fervent.

SECOND PART.

THE SACRAMENTS.

JESUS CHRIST Our Lord, the Son of God made man, chose and instituted certain outward signs to transmit His grace to men, and it is these outward signs that Christians call the sacraments. Just as God communicated Himself to us, in the mystery of the Incarnation, under a visible form, and by means of that sacred humanity to which He united His own divine Person, so He continues to unite Himself to our souls under visible forms, and by means of the holy sacraments.

The sacraments are the outward and visible part of religion; they answer the same end as the humanity of Jesus Christ in the Incarnation. They are to the Holy Spirit what the body is to the soul; the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church, and is given to her by the sacraments: they are, therefore, the instruments or outward channels of God's grace, and are to the Church what the bark is to the tree. Jesus Christ instituted them as the necessary means of our sanctification. And, although they are only means, we are all obliged to have recourse to them in order to attain true holiness.

The sacraments, we have said, are outward signs. An outward sign is an external thing which can be grasped or apprehended by the senses, and which signifies some other thing which the senses cannot apprehend. Thus, if I clench my hand, and confront my neighbor, I make use of an outward sign. My gesture is outward, because it appeals to the sense of sight; and it is a sign, because it signifies something that cannot be seen, namely, the threat I would convey to my neighbor, and the resentment that I feel toward him.

All words are outward signs; they are outward, because in being heard they affect the sense of hearing; and they are signs, because the different sounds which they form express and signify our thoughts, which are invisible, and are hidden in the depths of the mind. The Christian sacraments are all outward signs; they may all be apprehended by one or other of the five senses: they consist

either of ceremonies, gestures, or words, or of material things, which signify and produce an invisible action of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the faithful who have recourse to them.

There are seven sacraments, all instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. They are—Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. They all convey to the soul the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ, who comes in order to sanctify it in all the different conditions and various necessities of its spiritual life.

In Baptism, Jesus Christ gives us the Holy Spirit, that we may be born to spiritual and eternal life, and may thereby enter into the great family of the elect, which is the Catholic Church. The outward sign, which confers upon us the grace of baptism, is the action of the priest who pours water upon the head of the new Christian while pronouncing the words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

In Confirmation, Jesus Christ gives us His Holy Spirit to develop within us that life which He gave us in baptism, and to provide us with all the strength that we require in the many trials and combats of the Christian life; the outward sign which confers upon us the grace of confirmation is the action of the bishop who pronounces certain sacred words while anointing the foreheads of the faithful with the Holy Chrism.

In Holy Eucharist, Our Lord Jesus Christ gives Himself, with His humanity, His divinity, and the plenitude of His Spirit, and His abundant graces, under the appearance of bread and wine, constantly to feed and nourish the life of the soul, and to cause it to grow and increase in the midst of all the difficulties of our daily lives. The outward sign in Holy Eucharist is the true body of Jesus Christ, under the appearance of the bread and of the wine which hides His adorable Body.

In Penance Jesus Christ gives us the Holy Spirit, whom we have lost through sin, and thus enables us to rise anew to the Christian life. Just as the union of the body with the soul constitutes the life of the body, and just as this life is lost as soon as the soul is separated from the body, even so the union of the soul with the Holy Spirit of Jesus is spiritual and eternal life—the life of the soul; and this life is lost when sin separates the soul from the Holy Spirit, from Jesus, and from our heavenly Father. Penance is that means which the infinite mercy of God has provided to restore to us this life when we lose it after baptism. The outward sign, which confers

upon us the grace of the sacrament of penance, consists in the words spoken by the priest in giving absolution to the penitent who has just confessed his sins.

In Extreme Unction Jesus Christ sends us the Holy Spirit to purify us for the last time before we appear at His tribunal, and to sanctify our sufferings, our agony, and death. This is the last mark of His love, as Baptism is the first. When God sees it to be expedient for salvation, the Holy Spirit, by Extreme Unction, restores bodily health to the dying. The outward sign in this great sacrament is the oil with which the priest anoints the sick on all the organs of the senses while pronouncing certain prayers.

Holy Order, which is the sixth sacrament, is the outward sign by means of which Jesus Christ sends down the Holy Spirit upon those whom He deigns to elect from among His disciples to be His priests, namely, the dispensers of the sacraments, the ministers of religion, the preachers of the Gospel, and the pastors of the Christian people.

The outward sign by which the Holy Spirit comes to bestow this sacred dignity, and to shed His divine grace upon the soul of the Christian who is consecrated to the priestly office, is the imposition of the bishop's hands upon the head of him who is ordained, with many other affecting ceremonies, called by the general name of Ordination.

Lastly, in Matrimony, Our Lord, full of solicitude for our happiness and sanctification in every condition of life, gives to the husband and wife His Holy Spirit to constitute, authorize, and sanctify their union, to endue them with strength to preserve mutual fidelity and conjugal chastity, and to assist them in the many difficult duties which their common life and the education of their children will in future impose upon them.

The outward sign which confers the grace of this sacrament consists in certain ceremonial rites which constitute the alliance of the bride and bridegroom.

The seven sacraments of the Church are therefore outward signs instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ as the means of our sanctification. Two among them, Baptism and Penance, are destined to give the grace of God to those who have it not, and to those who have lost it. Baptism gives, and Penance restores, life to the soul. The five others, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Order, and Matrimony, neither give nor restore spiritual life, but they develop and increase it. It is therefore necessary to be in a state of grace—that is to say, not separated from God by any mortal

sin, in order to receive these sacraments worthily. If any one received knowingly either of these sacraments in a state of mortal sin, he would not only forfeit the grace bestowed through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart, but would moreover commit a horrible sacrilege, and would trample underfoot the merits of Jesus Christ, from whom all the efficacy of the sacraments springs.

Woe unto him who commits the sin of sacrilege; woe to the unworthy Christian who dares to communicate, or to receive confirmation, or to be married in a state of mortal sin, without having first obtained the pardon of his sins by the means of a good confession! The Son of God shall return to him once more, at the day of judgment; and for that unhappy man the greatness of His mercy shall be forever obliterated in the greatness of His justice.

But, on the other hand, how great is the joy, how inexhaustible the source of consolation for the true Christian who beholds his God ever ready to assist him in all his weak endeavors. He can every day, and at any moment in his life, drink plentifully at these life-giving fountains, which are the sources of all grace, and whose "waters," said Our Lord Jesus Christ, "spring forth unto everlasting life."

BAPTISM.

THERE are, as we have just said, seven sacraments in the Christian religion — that is to say, there are seven rites or external signs chosen by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself to sanctify our souls, by transmitting to them the divine grace to supply our various spiritual requirements.

The life of the soul may be compared to the life of the body. In order to grow, to develop, to receive nourishment, and to accomplish all its functions, the body must first of all be filled with the breath of life. It is the same with the soul. It must first of all receive life by its union with Jesus Christ; and if it does not receive this life it can do no Christian deeds, nor attain true sanctification. Therefore, Baptism is that external ceremony which has been ordained by God to give life to the soul, and to enable us to be born of the spirit, and to become the children of God and of His Church. For this reason we call Baptism the first and most fundamental of the sacraments, without which no one can be a Christian, or have any part with Jesus Christ.

Baptism is given by taking water and pouring it upon the head of the man or child who presents himself to be made a Christian, while

pronouncing the words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In order that the Baptism may be valid, the water used must be natural water, and the person who baptizes must pronounce the words just given at the same time that he pours the water.

In case of necessity, any one may, and should baptize, whether man, woman, or child is of no consequence; but only in a case of necessity, when the child is in imminent danger of death, and when there is no time to fetch a priest. Beyond this case of necessity, no one is permitted to administer the sacrament of Baptism; the priest being, by virtue of his sacred character, the dispenser of holy things and the minister of religion. Baptism is usually administered in churches, near the entrance, to signify that by baptism the child is admitted into the Church, namely, into the great company of Christians, servants of Jesus Christ, and children of God. Before pouring the water, and thus conferring the sacrament, the priest performs over the child many mystical ceremonies, and recites many prayers, of which the object is to implore for the new Christian the divine blessing, to drive away the devil, by whom he is separated from Jesus Christ through the stain of original sin, and symbolize the graces which Baptism is about to confer upon the soul. By the mouth of his godfather, or of his godmother, the child promises to God that he will be faithful to Him all his life, and that he will avoid sin to the utmost of his power; and he renounces the devil, vice, and evil works in order to embrace the service of Jesus Christ his Saviour. The godfather and godmother become even as the father and mother of the child in all that relates to the care of his soul, and are henceforth bound by a solemn duty to further his salvation by every means in their power. After the child has been baptized, the priest anoints him on the head with a consecrated oil called Holy Chrism, which is used only in the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Order.

The priest places in the hands of the newly made Christian, or rather in the hands of his godfather and godmother, a lighted taper, a striking symbol of what a Christian is, and always should be; for as the light consumes and absorbs the whole taper, causing it to pass away in light, so Jesus Christ becomes, in baptism, the life, the life-giving light of Christians, who are on earth only that they may be consumed in love for Him, and in entire devotion to His divine service. If they do but remain faithful, they shall hereafter be admitted into the eternal light and joy of Jesus Christ in heaven, even

like the taper, which, as it gradually consumes, becomes nothing else but light.

The day of our baptism is the day of our true birth—that is, of our birth to the true life. For we are not destined to live on earth even like sheep and oxen which have no souls, but are created for the life eternal—are created to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him with an undivided heart all through the probation of this mortal life, that we may thus reach our heavenly home, heirs to the happiness that knows no end.

We must faithfully keep the sacred promises of our baptism, and must take great care in causing them to be observed by those who depend upon us. Children of God, brothers of Jesus Christ, let us prove ourselves worthy of the grace bestowed on us in our baptism. To do this, we must avoid sin, fight against temptation, and be frequent in prayer; we must attend religious instructions (especially on Sundays and on festivals), and constantly observe the commandments of God and the laws of the Church. In one word, we must in all things strive to follow Christ. Earth has nothing more truly great and noble than the Christian whose life does no dishonor to the sacred name he bears.

CONFIRMATION.

Baptism is the first sacrament of the Christian religion; Confirmation is the second. Confirmation is, in respect to Baptism, just what the development of youth and manhood is to the simple birth. By birth we become men, but we are not men yet in every sense of the term—men capable of speaking, acting, working, and fighting. To become perfect men, we must grow and acquire strength, and gradually develop into manhood. So it is with the soul, of which the body is only the symbol and visible image. Our soul is spiritually united to Jesus Christ by baptism, and thus becomes a living soul in the sight of God. But the sacrament of Confirmation is needed to develop and bring to perfection the grace given in baptism, and to make the Christian a perfect Christian.

We do not mean by this that all those who are confirmed are perfect; alas! the devil and human weakness ever remain. But in Confirmation, the Christian receives from God all the strength he needs to become and to continue a perfect Christian—that is to say, a saint.

Our Lord gives us this assistance once for all, and for this reason

the sacrament of Confirmation is only received once during life. In the first ages of the Church, Confirmation was generally conferred immediately after baptism; but now it is the custom for children to receive it when they have reached the age of reason, or at least at the time of their first communion; since it is then that the passions first struggle for mastery, and that the true battle of life begins. To neglect wilfully to receive the sacrament of Confirmation at the appointed time is to be guilty of a great sin; and it is as great a fault in a father or mother not to oblige their children to be confirmed, or still worse, to prevent them.

The bishops alone have received from Jesus Christ the power to confirm. By Confirmation we are, in fact, called to fight valiantly against the devil, the world, and the flesh; and it is the bishops who command the great army of our God. The priests are captains who fight under the orders of their general. In order to confirm, the bishop, wearing his pontifical vestments, commences by imploring for those who present themselves to him the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, and recites certain ancient and admirable prayers. Then each one approaches in his turn, and the bishop traces with the Holy Chrism, upon the forehead of the Christian, the sign of the cross (which is the sign of the great victory won by Jesus Christ), and says, "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Such is the sacramental formula transmitted by the Apostles to the bishops, their successors. The pontiff then gives the person confirmed a little blow on the cheek, saying, "Peace be with thee." When all have received the sacrament, the bishop concludes the ceremony by asking of God, for His new soldiers, grace to fight manfully with the weapons with which this sacrament has now supplied them; and he then bestows upon all present his solemn benediction. On the day of Confirmation any saint may be chosen as the patron of that new life in which his example and protection will help us to persevere, and we would strongly recommend all children to take the name of Mary, and thus place their perseverance in holiness under the special protection of the most holy and immaculate Virgin, the Mother of God.

You have doubtless been both baptized and confirmed. Fight courageously against the enemies of your salvation, who are also the enemies of your happiness. Practise all Christian duties with untiring energy; banish from your heart all weakness and baseness and human respect Remember those striking words of our Saviour, so

consoling for the true Christian, so terrible for the unworthy—"He who shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I also be ashamed before My Father at the last day. He who perseveres unto the end shall be saved."

HOLY EUCHARIST.

HOLY EUCHARIST is the third sacrament of the Christian religion. If Baptism give life to the soul by uniting us spiritually to Jesus Christ, if Confirmation develop and complete this life-giving union, the Holy Eucharist is destined to preserve and nourish it.

Holy Eucharist is a sacrament instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and contains our adorable Saviour Himself, under the appearances of bread and wine. The day before His Passion, Jesus Christ took bread into His sacred hands, blessed it, and changed it by His almighty power into His own Body and Blood. "Take," said He to His Apostles, "take and eat ye all of this; FOR THIS IS MY BODY." And when they had communicated, He took a chalice of wine, blessed it in the same manner, and changed it into His precious blood, saying, "Take and drink ye all of this; FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD, the blood of the new and eternal testament, which shall be shed for you and for many, to the remission of sins." Then He gave to His Apostles, who thus became the first priests, the command and the power to do what He Himself had done, to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. "And you," he added, "as often as ye do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of Me." Ever since that time, the Apostles, and their legitimate successors, the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church, have every day, when celebrating Mass, consecrated bread and wine; and it is this bread and wine, miraculously changed into the Body and Blood of Our Lord, that we call the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, or the Blessed Sacrament. To communicate is to receive the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, or, in other words, it is to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, really present, though hidden beneath the veils of the sacred Host. This Body is verily the same Body that was once upon this earth, but it is not under the same conditions. In the Holy Eucharist it is in a glorified condition, and is thus immeasurably removed from the grossness of the natural and earthly body. To make a good communion is to receive Jesus Christ with right dispositions; to make a bad communion is to receive Him with evil dispositions. The first, the noblest, holiest, and most sublime

action of which a creature is capable, for it is to unite one's self to God. The last is a terrible sacrilege, by which we betray Jesus Christ, like Judas, with a kiss.

In order to communicate well, it is necessary to be in a state of grace (that is, to have no mortal sin upon the conscience), to be firmly resolved to live as a good Christian, to avoid sin, and to serve God faithfully; and lastly, to prepare for Holy Communion by prayer, spiritual reading, and recollection of heart. It is necessary, moreover, to be fasting, that is, not to have eaten or drunk anything since midnight. This has been commanded by the Church out of reverence for the Blessed Sacrament. Every one is obliged, under penalty of grievous sin, to receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, at the festival of Easter; this is what people commonly call their Easter duties. To communicate for the first time is called making the first communion; the time for this great event is, according to custom, the age of eleven, twelve, or thirteen years.

We may compare the Holy Eucharist, which nourishes the life of the soul, to that material bread which nourishes the life of the body. Food is not life, but it supports life, and if men ceased to eat, they would surely die. In the same manner the Holy Eucharist does not give life to the soul, but it preserves and nourishes that life which it received in baptism. It sustains and cements our union with Jesus Christ, and, by giving us renewed strength for the daily warfare, becomes to us the assured means and certain warrant of our final perseverance. It is a good and holy custom to communicate often, every fortnight for instance, or even every Sunday, according to each one's spiritual condition, and the advice of his director.

The early Christians communicated every day. No one can communicate too often who communicates well, and all do this who have made a good and careful confession, and who have an earnest desire and a firm resolve to continue faithful to the service of God. There are so many wonderful things to be said of this great and most adorable sacrament of the Eucharist, which enfolds within itself all the love and all the mysteries of God; the little we have just said will suffice, I hope, to renew in each of us the desire to show to Jesus Christ, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, a still greater love and reverence and devotion than we have shown Him hitherto.

FIGURES PROPHETIC OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

CHRIST, the eternal Son of God, appeared to the world, after forty centuries of longing expectation, through the mystery of His Incarnation. Returned to the bosom of His Father, after the thirty-three years of His life on earth, He still dwells among us, even unto the end of the world, through the no less adorable mystery of His sacramental presence. The Holy Eucharist does thus, in a manner, recapitulate and continue the mystery of the Incarnation from age to age. Even from the beginning of the world Jesus Christ desired that His patriarchs and prophets should have some knowledge of that Holy Eucharist which He would one day give to men, and with this object He instituted many signs and figures prophetic of this holy mystery.

The first of these was the tree of life planted by the Lord in the midst of Paradise. The earthly paradise itself represented the Catholic Church; the tree of life was a symbol of Christ, the centre of the Church and the eternal life of the faithful; the fruit of this mysterious tree was a figure of the Holy Eucharist, the bread of life, destined to preserve and strengthen our faith and holiness and love for God. Adam, in order to remain free from sin, was obliged to eat frequently of the fruit of the tree of life, just as we ourselves are obliged frequently to receive the Holy Eucharist in order to remain faithful to God and strong to resist Satan.

The second sign prophetic of the Eucharist was the sacrifice of Melchisedech and Abraham. Melchisedech, whom the Scriptures call the priest of the Most High, and king of Jerusalem, presented himself before the holy patriarch, and offered to God a singular sacrifice of bread and wine; after which he was seen no more. Melchisedech is a type of Christ, the King of heaven, coming to man through the Incarnation, and offering up for him, before His return to the heavenly Jerusalem, the sacrifice of the Eucharist, under the appearances of bread and wine. Abraham is the type of the true Christian, who, in the fulness of faith, adores Jesus Christ, the eternal Pontiff, the spotless Victim, the sacred Host, immolated upon Calvary for our redemption, and ever dwelling, out of love for us, hidden, in the silence of our tabernacles. The Paschal Lamb is another touching prophecy of the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus is the Lamb of God, immolated on the cross for the sins of the whole world, and giving His own Body to be the food of Israel.

which represents the Church. By the sacrifice of the Mass Jesus renews upon our altars the sacrifice of the cross, and by the Holy Communion He applies to each individual Christian the fruits of His immolation.

But the most striking, perhaps, of all the types prophetic of the Holy Eucharist is the manna of the desert. This great miracle continued during forty years. Each year, for forty years, the people of God, to the number of more than two millions of men, received from heaven a miraculous food, a daily bread, symbol of the True Bread come down from heaven, and which is Jesus Christ Himself present in the Blessed Sacrament. The manna was kept in a golden vase in the ark of alliance, in the most holy place of the temple of Jerusalem; the Holy Eucharist is, in the same manner, preserved with love in our Churches, in the hidden places of our sanctuaries, a thousand times more sacred than the holy of holies of the ancient dispensation. Each day, at Mass, this heavenly Bread descends upon the earth, and each one among the faithful can, and should, go to receive it as his food, and to draw from it the necessary strength to bear with holy patience the fatigue of the journey and the weariness of the desert. Ah! what would the world be like if all Christians went in faith and love to receive communion every day? This earth would then be Paradise!

We might give many other figures of the Eucharist recorded in the sacred books; among others that mysterious bread, brought by an angel to the Prophet Elias, which supplied the man of God, after an uninterrupted journey of forty days and forty nights, with strength to reach Mount Horeb, where the glory of the Lord was revealed to him.

Jesus Christ our Saviour thus foreshadowed, during forty centuries, the most precious of all the gifts of His love, the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, which is the food of our souls, the support of our weakness, our joy, our strength, our true life, the pledge of our perseverance, and of our entrance into the glorious paradise which awaits us when our weary pilgrimage is ended.

INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST.

On the evening of Holy Thursday Our Lord Jesus Christ first entered upon His Passion, by His institution of the divine Eucharist. He was in a large room in the town of Jerusalem, and He there celebrated the Last Supper with His twelve Apostles. In order to set

us an example of obedience, Jesus, with His disciples, fulfilled in all things the religious laws of Moses. Although the God of Moses, He obeyed in deep humility, thus taking from us all excuse for negligence in the performance of our religious duties. When He had eaten of the paschal lamb, He rose, took a basin filled with water, and having girded Himself with a towel, He knelt humbly before each of His Apostles, and washed their feet before He instituted the Blessed Sacrament. By this He desired to give us many lessons; He wished to teach us with what perfect purity of conscience we should approach the holy table; with what charity we should render one to another every possible service; and how even superiors should, for the love of God, abase themselves before their inferiors, and should be full of condescension, treating all men as their brethren. When the Lord had risen, He sat down again at the table, surrounded by His disciples. He took bread, and, blessing it, He lifted His eyes to heaven, and said to His Apostles, "Take and eat, for this is My Body;" then He took a chalice, filled it with wine, blessed it in like manner, and gave to His disciples, saying, "Take and drink, for this is My Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal testament, which shall be shed for you, to the remission of sins." And He added, "And you, as often as ye do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of Me."

By these all-powerful words, the Son of God, Creator of the world, changed the bread into His Body, and the wine into His Blood, and gave to His priests the power and the command to do what He had done, and thus to consecrate the Most Holy Eucharist. And this is what they do, day after day, at the altar, during the sacrifice of the Mass. By the power of God imparted to them, they change the bread and wine into the true Body and true Blood of Jesus Christ; so that in their hands, upon the altar, there remains only the simple appearance of bread and wine, concealing from our sight Jesus Christ Himself, there living and there present in all the fulness of the divine mysteries, and in the majesty of His eternal glory.

How can this be? This is the secret of God, as impenetrable to angels as to men. We only know that thus it truly is, and this knowledge is all-sufficient for us. We believe the Word of God, and such faith is the highest exercise of reason. The Eucharist is the mystery of faith. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."

ON THE REAL PRESENCE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

THE Eucharist is a sacrament (viz., an outward sign), which contains Our Lord Jesus Christ living and concealed under the appearances of bread and wine.

The Church teaches us that the bread and wine are changed in the hands of the priest during Mass into the Body and the Blood of Jesus Christ. It is this mysterious bread, Jesus Christ Himself, that Christians call the Eucharist or the Blessed Sacrament. Behold! how deep a mystery! glorious, unfathomable, and divine! But are we perfectly sure that we are not mistaken? is it a certain fact that Jesus Christ is really present in the Blessed Sacrament? yes, it is very certain, very sure, and we desire no other proof than the divine words of Jesus Himself.

The more impenetrable this mystery, the more implicit and absolute the faith required of us by the Son of God, so much the more distinct and unmistakable would have been the teaching that He gave us concerning it. And such that teaching is; and His words on the subject of the real presence are so perfectly plain, so clear and positive, that for three hundred years Protestants have turned and twisted in vain in a useless endeavor to evade the full force and meaning of words they cannot deny. The evidence remains, and overwhelms them.

Let them, for instance, open the Gospel. Our Lord Jesus Christ speaks twice of the Holy Eucharist; the first time to promise it, about a year before His death; the second time to institute it. The promise is related by the Apostle St. John, in the sixth chapter of his Gospel. Our Lord was by the Sea of Galilee. He had just miraculously fed five thousand persons with five loaves. Multiplied in the hands of the Apostles who distributed them to the people by the command of their Master, these miraculous loaves were a symbol and an acted prophecy of that living bread, far more mysterious, which these same Apostles, and the priests, their successors, should be one day charged to distribute to all Christian people Overcome with admiration at the sight of this great miracle, they said among themselves, "This is of a truth the Messias whom we look for." "Labor not," said the Lord to them, "for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man

will give you. This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He hath sent. But I have told you already; you have seen me, you have seen my miracles, and yet you do not believe." And when the Jews said to Him that Moses their father had formerly given them manna, a well-known miracle which had proved His divine mission, Jesus answered, "Amen, Amen. Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world." Then the Jews began to murmur, as Protestants and unbelievers murmur still. But Jesus said to them, "Murmur not among yourselves. Amen, Amen. I say unto you, He that believeth in Me hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." Then the Jews began to murmur more loudly, saying, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" And they would not believe. But Jesus Christ reaffirmed to them, with still greater power and decision, that He would give them bread which should be His own Body, and His own Blood—bread which should be Himself, and that all must eat this living bread who would be of the number of His disciples. And He did, in a manner, pledge Himself to a fulfilment of the words that He had spoken. "Amen, Amen. I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed; and my blood is drink indeed: He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him. This is the bread that came down from heaven. He that eateth this bread shall live forever." It was impossible to speak more clearly. And yet many who heard Him were still incredulous. "This saying is hard!" they cried; "who can believe it?" And they went away from Jesus just as Protestants go away from Him now, since they also refuse to believe in the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharistic bread, and have allowed themselves to be separated from Him by Luther and Calvin, and others who have joined in the same mad and miserable rebellion. Jesus is not troubled by this defection. Although God has an infinite love for man, He has no need of him, and will never force his homage. Then Je

sus turned to His Apostles—"And you," He asked them sadly, "will you also go away?"

Then it was that St. Peter, throwing himself at His feet, gave heartfelt utterance to those words of faith, obedience, and love, which have ever since been echoed by the Church from generation to generation—"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that Thou art the Christ the Son of God!"

Surely this is sufficient to convince all who love the truth and seek it with sincerity. Nevertheless, the words of Jesus Christ when instituting the Holy Eucharist, are even more formal and distinct than the words with which He promised it.

When such an assertion has been made by Jesus Christ, it is hard to believe that Christians can dare to say that the body of Jesus Christ is not really present in the Eucharist. And yet this is what all Protestants venture to declare.

In Germany there is a striking demonstration of this truth. Our Lord is represented between Luther and Calvin, the two principal founders of Protestantism. Luther pretended that in the Blessed Sacrament there is both the substance of the Bread and the Body of Jesus Christ; Calvin, more daring and more honest, said that Jesus Christ is not there at all, and that the bread is only a symbol of His body. (As if a piece of bread could by any possibility be a symbol and a figure of a living body!) Each of the three here portrayed holds, therefore, in his hands the Eucharistic bread; and these are the different inscriptions which are placed under each: Under Calvin, we read—This is not my body, but only a symbol of my body. Under Luther—This is bread and my body. And under Our Lord—This is my body. Then beneath the three—Which is right? For my part, I take my stand amid the ranks of God, and proclaim boldly with the Catholic Church, assembled at the Council of Trent, "I believe and I know that Jesus Christ is really present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. Whoever believes otherwise is not a Christian!"

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

A FEW more words upon this divine subject, the source of all holiness, and the centre of the Christian religion.

From the time of the Apostles, Christians had always taught and believed that the Eucharist was the true Body of Jesus Christ,

hidden under the appearances of the consecrated host. Three hundred years ago, first in Germany, and then in Switzerland, and then in France, certain men sprung up in rebellion against the unanimous belief of fifteen centuries of Christianity, and declared, with unheard of presumption, that the whole of the Christian world had been hitherto deceived; that they themselves, and they alone, possessed a clearer light and truer knowledge than all the great doctors of Christian antiquity, and that the Holy Eucharist was not the Body of the Lord. They brought forward no proof, no reasonable argument, in support of their new doctrine. They asserted and believed it because such was their good pleasure; and men were to give credence to their teaching because such was their desire, and this they called liberty of thought.

But the sun does not cease to shine if a madman deny its existence; and no blasphemy will alter the divine institution. Outraged and disowned, mocked and crucified Jesus, on the day of His Passion, was no less the one true God; outraged and disowned, blasphemed and trampled under foot, the Blessed Sacrament is no less the adorable Body of the Lord.

Jesus is silent, enduring all things from the depths of the tabernacle, even as He was silent and enduring all things before Caiphas, before Herod, and upon the painful cross. "Come out from the tabernacle, come down from the altar, and we will believe in Thee" —so speak the unbelieving to Jesus veiled in the Blessed Sacrament. "Come down from the Cross if thou art the Son of God, the King of Israel, and we will believe in Thee," cried the blaspheming Pharisees beneath that cross on Calvary. The Protestant who refuses to believe in the presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, only because it is a mystery which he cannot comprehend, and therefore chooses to reject, exactly resembles the Pharisee who refused to believe that Jesus was God, only because he could not comprehend how God could be made man.

The Apostles and the faithful disciples believed in the divinity of Jesus, although it was not outwardly revealed, only because Jesus affirmed with divine authority that He was truly God, and because He afterward supported His words by His miracles. Sons of the early Christians, we believe with them the infallible assertion of Jesus, whom we know to be the one true God, and when we hear Him say, "This is My Body," we humbly believe that, under the appearance of bread, there is really present the Body of Our Lord, the Body of God made man; we believe without understanding it, with

out seeing it, and we are of the number of those whom Jesus Himself proclaimed blessed, when He said to St. Thomas, "Because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."

Good sense, far more than learned controversy, should in this case strike at the root of every difficulty. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, said, while presenting in peace and love the mysterious Host, "This is My Body." The Protestant says of this same sacred Host, "This is not the Body of Christ." Which should we believe? . . .

What, therefore, does the Catholic Church teach upon this point? Since St. Peter and the Apostles, she has taught simply that which Jesus Christ Himself proclaimed at the Last Supper. She says that the Eucharist is the Body of Jesus Himself, true God and true man, continuing by this mystery of love to dwell among us, as a father in the midst of his family, as a king in the midst of his subjects, as the good shepherd in the midst of his flock. She teaches that the Eucharist is a divine and incomprehensible mystery, even as the mystery of the Incarnation is incomprehensible and divine. She condemns, even while she pities, those unhappy wanderers from her fold who prefer to rely upon the caprices of feeble human reason, rather than upon the immutable Word of God.

The first who committed the sin of sacrilege, by insulting the Holy Eucharist, was the traitor Judas; and it is said of this miserable man, "It had been better for him if he had not been born."

When we see all faith lost in the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament, that mystery which reveals to us most practically the love of Jesus for our souls, we are inspired with the same feeling of sadness and pity which overflowed the heart of Jesus in the Garden of Olives, when He stood face to face with him who first despised the Holy Eucharist! . . . *Amice, ad quid venisti?*—Friend, whereto art thou come?

PENANCE.

THE sacrament of Penance is the medicine of the soul, and it is for this very reason that it is obnoxious to many. The soul, born in misery, by reason of original sin, and constantly drawn to evil by the power of Satan, sometimes succumbs in the constant struggle, loses grace by separating itself from Jesus Christ by sin, and would thus fall into despair, and into hell, were it not for the mercy of God. The sacrament of Penance is the greatest proof of this immeasurable mercy. Baptism unites us to Jesus Christ, and gives life

to the soul; Confirmation strengthens this union; Holy Eucharist preserves it; Penance restores it when it has been diminished or destroyed. It is diminished by venial sin, viz., sin of a less serious nature; it is destroyed by mortal sin. When we have been so unhappy as to sin grievously, we must not be discouraged, but must have recourse to that remedy which our dear Saviour has, in His loving-kindness, entrusted to the hands of His priests. This remedy is the sacrament of Penance—the pardon which the minister of Jesus Christ gives to the penitent sinner, in the name of God Himself, after the confession or acknowledgment which the sinner makes of all his faults. Jesus Christ instituted this great sacrament of mercy upon Easter Day, by saying to His Apostles, in whose midst He had just appeared, risen from the dead, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Ever since that time, Christians have confessed their sins to the priests, successors of the Apostles, and have received absolution, or pardon, in the name of Jesus Christ, and through the merits of His cross. Protestants object to confession, and say that it was not instituted by Jesus Christ. But the words of the Saviour are distinct and unmistakable, and for eighteen hundred years they have been understood and practised just as the Catholic Church understands and practises them to-day.

The true motive which causes men to reject confession is pride, which shrinks from the acknowledgment of wrong-doing, and an utter want of that spirit of faith which alone can discern the true evil of sin, and the great excellence of the state of grace. Alas! what bitter regret, and what eternal despair, shall be the portion of those who die in wilful rejection of the truth.

The sacrament of Penance is a judgment. The priest, the representative and minister of Jesus Christ, is the judge. Therefore he is seated as at a tribunal. The guilty person is his own accuser: he presents himself before his judge in the humble posture which is befitting for a sinner; kneeling, with uncovered head, he receives the blessing of the priest, who, although a judge, is also a father, ever ready to comfort and to guide, and then accuses himself of his sins, and excites himself to repentance. If the priest find him sufficiently well disposed, he remits his sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and imposes a penance—that is to say, some work of piety destined to satisfy the justice of God. If he do not find the soul sufficiently well disposed to

receive absolution, he simply gives his benediction to the penitent, telling him to return another time better prepared, in order to be absolved. It is the absolution which remits sin; without it, there is no sacrament of Penance, properly so-called; confession and repentance are only the necessary preparation.

It is well to know that the mercy of God will supply all that is wanting when we repent of our sins and desire to confess them, but are absolutely prevented, in a shipwreck for instance, or in battle, or on a journey, or by an unforeseen accident, when no priest is near, and we are threatened by danger of death. We must then have recourse with confidence to Jesus our dear Saviour, who loved us even to the death of the cross, and we must make heartfelt acts of contrition and love, and we must promise to God that we will go to confession as early as possible should we escape this peril; and then we have every reason to hope that our sins will be forgiven us. But for him who *can* confess, there is no other means of being restored to the grace of God; and no repentance can be efficacious without the sacrament of pardon instituted by Jesus Christ.

Every one is bound, under penalty of mortal sin, to go to confession at least once a year, and that at Easter; but it is far better to confess much more frequently. "*Plus on se lave, plus on est propre,*" says the French proverb, which means—the more often we wash, the cleaner we shall be.

If you are not at peace with God, and still more, if your days of holiness and innocence are long since past, take courage, summon all your resolution, seek a priest, tell him that you desire to confess your sins, and that you trust that he will help you to shake off the bondage in which you have been held. Be assured that you will rejoice to have followed my advice.

THE TWO TRIBUNALS.

Among many Christian truths there is one which is revealed to us by reason, as well as by faith; and this is that we must all die and appear before God, who, being justice itself, cannot allow evil to go unpunished nor righteousness unrewarded. The thought of death and of the judgment of God is a terrible one for all, because we are all sinners, often great sinners; and even the best among us is, after all, only the least wicked. Therefore, what is there that a sinner should not fear at the hands of infinite justice?

The best of men have been known to tremble at the approach of

that supreme moment in which they must be judged, and upon which their whole eternity must depend. One of the richest and most distinguished officers in the court of the Roman emperors, Arsenus by name, renounced while still young all worldly advantages in order to serve God better, and to prepare himself solely for a favorable judgment. Nevertheless, when at the point of death, he was seen to weep and tremble. "How! my father," asked one of the religious who attended on him, "do you fear the judgments of God? Is it not for seventy years that you have done penance?" "Yes, my son," answered the holy old man; "yes, I tremble. What is all our righteousness in the presence of infinite justice? I fear that I may not have merited mercy. I hope, but I fear; I hope for the mercy of God, but I fear because of His justice."

If such have been the feelings of the greatest saints, what should ours be, poor miserable sinners, who, from our childhood, have committed a multitude of sins of every description, and have never done penance with all our heart? What shall we say when we come to appear before the tribunal of an infinitely holy God, when all our thoughts, and all our words, and all our actions, and all our omissions, shall rise up before our horror-stricken gaze, even as a thronging array of unanswerable accusers? All the years, all the hours, all the minutes of our life, forgotten by ourselves, but living and ever present in the sight of God, shall be themselves our sentence! . . . and woe to us if we are condemned! What, then, shall become of us? for we are all sinners, and before the tribunal of divine justice we can only be condemned—condemned eternally!

This inevitable conclusion would lead us to despair, if, besides this tribunal of inflexible justice, Jesus, the Saviour of the world, had not instituted upon earth another tribunal—a tribunal of mercy and hope. This also is the tribunal of God; but it is the tribunal, the judgment of our Redeemer. He leaves us free to choose between these two tribunals; and he who presents himself willingly to be judged on earth has the infallible promise of God Himself that he shall not be judged in eternity. You have known this tribunal of mercy from your childhood, for it is the tribunal of Penance. The judge chosen by Jesus Christ to pronounce sentence upon the sinner is the priest, the minister of God, and in nothing more than in this can we admire the tenderness of the Good Shepherd for His wandering sheep.

For who and what is the priest to whom Christ has entrusted the right to judge us? He is no sinless angel, but a man like to our

selves, who knows by experience human weakness and misery, who has need himself of pardon and pity, and who has recourse himself to the ministry of another priest to obtain the remission of his sins. Can such a judge inspire us with terror, and are we not assured beforehand of his commiseration? And then we may choose from among many, and seek out the priest in whom we can feel the greatest confidence. If we were forced to travel a hundred leagues to save our soul, by reconciling ourselves to God, what would the transitory fatigues of a journey be, when contrasted with the happiness of eternity? But it is not so; the priest is even at our doors, ever ready, like his divine Master, to receive the penitent sinner. Do we not trample under foot all Christian feeling and every semblance of good sense, if we refuse to have recourse to so simple a remedy?

And even the shame of this acknowledgment almost entirely disappears, owing to the conditions of the judgment. The law of the most inviolable secrecy closes the lips of the priest, and death itself would not induce him to betray the trust. Blind hatred of religion, in union with the most absurd ignorance, has alone been able to produce, in journals and mischievous romances, lying accusations, which unfortunately succeed in imposing upon the credulous.

Not only is the judgment secret, but the accuser is no other than the sinner himself, who already knows his faults. We might even add that the priest, too, knows them before the hearing, for all men, alas! resemble each other, and, whatever the nature of our accusations, it is almost certain that our confessor has heard still worse. When the accusation is ended, the judge weighs the sentence; and if the accused sincerely repent, this sentence is infallibly a pardon. And then, how perfect the joy, how perfect the peace, in the heart of the pardoned and purified sinner! He is once more the friend of God; he has heard pronounced over his head that sentence of absolution which God engaged Himself to ratify in heaven when He said to His priests: "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven; and whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them!"

And lastly, there is still one other mark of the divine mercy in the institution of the tribunal of Penance, and that is, that we may gain absolution, not only once during the course of our life (which would be in itself a great mercy), but a hundred times, a thousand times, constantly. Even human weakness should no longer cause us fear, since—provided we sincerely repent of the past, and are earnest in

our good resolutions for the future—we are always assured of obtaining pardon and life. Let us then take courage, and return to God our Father; let us confess our sins to His minister with thankfulness and humility, and escape at any price the judgment of divine justice and the sentence of condemnation which hangs over our head. Since we cannot escape the tribunal of God, let us be so far friends to our own selves as to choose mercy rather than justice, confession rather than hell!

People do not as a rule like to confess. This is not hard to understand. People do not generally like medicine, as we have before remarked; and, since confession is the remedy for that great and universal malady which we call sin, it would be strange indeed if it were not bitter and disagreeable. Therefore, even after having convinced you of the divine institution of confession, after having convinced you, not only of its utility, but of its absolute necessity, in order to obtain the pardon of your sins, and to save your soul, I hear you murmuring, "Go to confession! That was all very well when I was a child, when I went to school; but now!"——

Well! and now? Is it possible that you have no soul now? Have you left your soul at school? If you stood in need of confession when you were young, when the warfare of your passions had scarcely begun, do you not stand far more in need of it, now that those passions have grown strong and violent? Does the soldier armed for action throw away his arms when the battle-hour arrives? The sole difference between the child and the man, with regard to confession, is that the man needs it more than the child.

Confession is necessary at every age, because at every age it is necessary to obey the law of God, promulgated by the Catholic Church. And the law of God commands every man, without exception, who is capable of sin, to go to confession. It is necessary at every age, because at all ages men can sin, and at all ages they may die; and confession alone is the divine remedy which cleanses from sin, and holds the soul in readiness to appear before God.

(But it is very disagreeable to go to confession!)

Alas! yes. We do not urge it as a means of amusement. Things that are good and useful are not always amusing. It is not amusing, as I have said, to take medicine when we are ill; and yet we take it in order to be cured. Duty is not, as a rule, amusing, but it is good, useful, necessary; and pleasure must at all times be subordinate to it.

Thus it is with confession. It is a remedy, and it is a duty—a

difficult duty, but most useful and indispensable; a disagreeable remedy, so much the more disagreeable, as it is the more necessary, but still a remedy, and as needful as it is efficacious.

And then, be just. Whose fault is it? Why do you sin? If you do not sin, if you had not given to your soul that mortal sickness which is sin, you would have had no need of this remedy, which is so unpleasant. You must pay the penalty of your own acts, my friend; and since you have sinned you must also confess.

(But I have been no worse than others.)

I do not say that you are worse than others; but that since you have sinned, just as others sin, you must also confess, just as others confess.

(But other people do not go to confession.)

So much the worse for them if they do not. They should go. Must you suffer yourself to die because others are so senseless? When you are ill you call in a doctor quickly, do you not? And yet some people refuse to do so, and die because of their negligence; they are wrong, and you are right in not following their example. And as for your soul, you will surely do at least as much for it as for your body. Others should confess, because the command of Jesus Christ is general.

(But I should scarcely have anything to say to the priest. I have neither robbed nor murdered. I am well known. I am an honest man.)

Well, you will not have to assert yourself to be an honest man, any more than of being a robber or a murderer! But you will accuse yourself of all besides; and there is much, be sure of it. You have neglected a thousand most important duties, beginning with all the duties of the Christian life. You have a thousand times broken that contract of alliance which you signed with God on the day of your baptism. Open the "Daily Companion" for a few moments, or even the Catechism, and in looking through the examination of conscience you will doubtless find that you are in possession of no trifling burden. You must lay it down, my friend! or you cannot enter paradise; you cannot even enter purgatory; and if you are discovered bearing such a burden you will certainly be lost. Those who guard the gates of heaven can never be deceived.

(But I do not know to whom I can go. I am not acquainted with any priest.)

But the parish priest is known to you?

(I do not like him; and besides, I should not care for my confessor to know me personally. He would have a bad opinion of me.)

Indeed! you who had scarcely anything to say! . . . And then, why do you dislike him? Is he not the minister of God, and your own spiritual father? Is he not the kindest and most devoted friend to the poor? Your repugnance is most unjust, and I entreat you to fight against it. But if you still find it is too strong, go to some other priest, to him in whom you can feel the greatest confidence. Choose from among those who have the greatest love for the poor. Thank God, good priests are not scarce among us.

Cast out from your mind, once for all, the idea that the confessor despises his penitents when they acknowledge serious faults. Nothing is so false as this supposition. The confessor is the messenger of mercy, and of pardon. He pities the sinner, he loves him, he consoles and encourages him, and pardons his sins in the name of Jesus Christ. The priest has too clear a knowledge of human weakness to despise any one.

(But I have sinned so deeply.)

Your sins are not so great as the mercy of God. God pardons everything to him who repents with his whole heart. And it is this same unlimited power of mercy which He has delegated to His priests. "Whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Go therefore to confession, my dear friend, if you are so unhappy as to have relinquished the practice of the law of God. Do not content yourself with being an honest man, for God is not contented with that, but requires you to be something more. Become a good Christian, a true Catholic. That is, after all, the way to live in peace, to be really happy, and to possess a tranquil and contented spirit. Blessed, says the Gospel, Blessed are the clean of heart!

THE SAFETY-VALVE.

A CERTAIN actress in a large town had a little girl of eleven or twelve years old. The mother, although entirely negiectful of her own religious duties, still remembered that she was a Catholic, and was desirous that her little girl should make her first communion, and that, too, in the best way possible. For this purpose she took her to the house of the Rev. Father M., one of the best and most charitable priests in the town. He received her with a kindness which made a vivid impression upon her, and it was arranged that in a few days the instructions should begin in the presence of the mother.

Shortly after this first interview, Father M., in returning from a visit to a sick person, passed down the street in which his little pupil lived. He rang at the door, and it was opened by a servant. The priest gave his name, and she requested him to come in, saying that her mistress had given her orders to ask the priest in every time that he might call.

The girl had taken this command literally; so she led the priest into the very room where her mistress was sitting at table with a number of her friends, all actors and actresses feasting merrily. The priest felt decidedly entrapped, and the guests also. He wished to retire at once, giving the mistake of the servant as his excuse; but the mistress of the house pressed him so strongly to remain for a short time, requesting him to do so in the name of the assembled company, and with such evident sincerity, that he felt compelled to remain, and to take a chair for a few moments. The little girl was at the table near to her mother, and by the side of another actress, who appeared to be about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age.

Now Father M. was an exceedingly good and clever man, and was not of the number of those who are afraid of sinners. He understood that at this table, and in the midst of so strange a company, there was some good to be done, and that Providence would not have led him here without any purpose. He therefore answered with the utmost civility to the friendly advances of which he was the object, and soon succeeded in gaining the sympathy of the guests. Finding it rather difficult to enter into conversation, he addressed himself to the little girl, and asked her if she were making a good preparation for her first communion. "Yes, Father, I am trying my best," answered the child; "but here is a lady," she added, pointing out the young actress who was sitting next to her, "who has something to tell you, only she is afraid." The actress blushed, and acknowledged, with a shade of embarrassment, that she was desirous of giving the little girl her white dress for her first communion. "That is a very good and kind thought," answered the priest; "but you might," he added gently, "do something better still, if you would but follow this little child in the fulfilment of religious duties." The actress blushed still more deeply. "Unfortunately, that is not possible," she said. "My profession is my only means of living, and it is one which interdicts the practice of religion; besides which, I have never made my first communion; and now I am too old." "We are never too old to return to God; and at your age it is never impossible to relinquish one profession, and to make choice of some other more in

accordance with the Christian life." "His reverence is right," said an actor, laughing. "You really had better go to confession." The actress made no answer, and the conversation soon became general. They questioned the priest on the subject of confession, and on the position of actors and actresses with regard to the Church. The talk was not free from the usual lively sallies and ready repartee, but no bitter or unpleasant words were spoken.

The dinner ended, all rose from the table. The windows of the room commanded an extensive view of a beautiful lake. A steamboat was just passing. "See, gentlemen," said the priest, "here is a very clear and simple illustration of the advantage of confession. You see this steamboat. A powerful force puts its machinery into motion, and causes it to advance rapidly; but this force would be, in itself, a danger, an unfailing principle of explosion and destruction, were it not for a certain contrivance which is termed the safety-valve. By means of this valve the surplus vapor is thrown off, and both boat and passengers are in safety. So it is with us all. We all possess certain powerful forces, which are our passions; for these forces, for these passions, we need a valve, an opening, without which we are lost. This valve is confession; it is that pure and holy confidence which God has given us for the consolation of our hearts and the purifying of our consciences. And further, we may remark, how in Protestant and in infidel countries, where confession is unknown, there is far more mental alienation, many more suicides, many more moral accidents, than in those countries where confession is the practice of the people." And the priest developed this theory both forcibly and scientifically, supporting his words by numerous examples.

When at last he rose to go, he left the whole company most pleasantly impressed by the kindness of his manner, and also by the culture of his mind. The young actress accompanied him to the door. "Follow the reverend father to the church," said one of the actors, "and make your confession at once; you would be all the better for it." "I do not deny it," answered the young woman seriously; "and I do not know what should prevent me." And going out with the priest, she followed him to the entrance door. When she was alone with him she began weeping bitterly. "You have saved me," she exclaimed in a voice tremulous with tears. "It was Providence which sent you to this house. I was quite hopeless. Only this evening I had madly resolved to plunge into the lake, and thus to put an end to all the miseries and troubles of my life Only a few

days ago I was hissed on the stage, and I have no wish to act again. This morning I learned that the man to whom I was to have been married has engaged himself to another. I had no resources, no friend on earth, and I longed to die. But now I repent—I will confess my sins—I will confess at once." The priest gently calmed the poor girl, and encouraged her in her good purpose. He added some few words of Christian counsel to those which he had spoken in the hearing of every one, and the young woman appointed a certain hour the next day in which she would come to confession.

Through an energetic determination, she became a good and fervent Christian. She has left the theatre, and has undertaken the care of her friend's little girl, and now they are both comfortably settled in a large town, where they are able to gain a livelihood in a modest but honorable position.

To all who read this, and who do not practise their Christian duties, I would say, as Our Lord said in His Gospel, "Go, and do the same!"

PASTOR ATGER, AND CONFESSION.

In June, 1858, I was constantly meeting at Paris a very worthy man named Francis Atger; he was about forty-five years of age, and had exercised for twenty years the profession of a Protestant pastor. He had been for some time pastor at Pont-de-Montvert, in the Cevennes. He was a clever man, upright and honorable, and sincerely religious. For a long time his different colleagues had been in the habit of laughing at his sympathy with Catholic institutions, and had given him the name of "the Canon."

This poor man first wrote to me, and afterward spoke openly to me of his great uncertainty with regard to the truth and of his growing antipathy to the doctrinal anarchy of the various Protestant sects; and in the end he did not fail to recognize the only way which leads through truth to life. "My decision is made;—I am a Catholic," he said, when leaving me. "I am going to arrange my family affairs, and then I will return with my two sons and my poor wife, if she consent to follow me." He was never able to return; first his affairs, and afterward his health, detained him in the mountains, where he died some months ago. Notwithstanding the violent opposition which pursued him even up to his last moments, he was able, I have been informed, to confess to the venerable curé at Pont-de-Montvert, to abjure upon his death-bed the heresy of Calvin, and to

appear "having on a wedding garment" at the tribunal of the eternal Bridegroom of the Church.

He related to me, during the course of our discussions and confidential talks, the two following incidents, which had happened to himself and had helped to prove to him the religious excellence of confession:

"Some years ago," he said, "I was engaged in mission, and was riding to a little town at which I was to preach. I carried behind me at the horse's saddle a small portmanteau, which contained, among other things, a rather large sum of money—more than seven hundred francs. Some clever thief, by cutting the straps of this portmanteau, contrived to rob me with such dexterity that I have never been able to discover where or how it was done. A singular idea instantly presented itself to my mind. 'The country through which I am passing,' I thought, 'is chiefly Catholic; if the thief only happen to be a Catholic by birth, and should go sooner or later to confession, I have some hope of recovering my property.' I could scarcely refrain from laughing at myself for building upon such a wild probability, and yet it often recurred to my mind. . . . A few weeks after the Paschal season, what was my surprise, and at the same time my thankfulness, to receive a letter from the priest of the place in which I had been robbed, informing me that I could recover at his house the exact sum which I had lost. 'Some one owes it to you,' he wrote, 'and I am charged to restore it.' Another time I was robbed in another village which was entirely Protestant. 'There is no hope for me this time,' I said to my wife. 'There are no Catholics here,' and in fact my money never returned to me."

I received these curious details from the very lips of the pastor himself.

EXTREME UNCTION.

THIS name alone is sufficient to fill the mind with sad, although serious and salutary, thoughts. We must all one day die, and Extreme Unction is the sacrament of the dying. In order to receive it well when our last hour comes, we should have a clear knowledge of this great sacrament, and should rightly understand the object of its institution, and the marvellous effects which it is destined to work upon the soul. Death is not the end of all things, as some few people, with a certain anomalous order of intelligence, will venture to assert. Death is, on the contrary, the beginning of the true life, of

that unchanging and eternal life, for which our transient human life is but the preparation. There is a close analogy between our spiritual life on earth and the life of the little infant yet unborn; because, by union with its mother, the child possesses indeed the germ of life, and yet it does not live, properly speaking, until the moment of its birth, and of its entrance into this world. Such is the present life contrasted with the life eternal.

By our union with Jesus Christ we possess the germ of that holy and eternal life into which we shall soon enter, and the moment of our death will be the commencement of that glorious life for which God has created us. Death, therefore, is nothing but a birth, a transition, a day to be infinitely welcomed and desired, by all who are true Christians and true servants of God. But, alas! however holy our desires, we are still poor sinners, very weak, and very liable to err; and we might well be tempted to despair at the thought of the infinite holiness, and to shrink at the thought of the terrible judgment, of Jesus Christ our God. He who, while on earth, revealed Himself to us only as a God of mercy and compassion, instituted this sacrament of Extreme Unction, in order to calm and comfort our last moments, and to grant us one last union with our Saviour, who thus applies to us, by the ministry of the priest, the merits of His passion and His death.

Jesus Christ, our Judge, comes thus to us Himself to reassure, to cover us with His sacred Blood, and to prepare us, by this supreme sanctification, to appear at His tribunal. The secondary object of the sacrament of Extreme Unction is to restore health to the body, if a prolonged life be necessary to the salvation of the soul. It is the height of foolishness to be afraid of Extreme Unction, and to imagine that it can cause death to the sick. Christians never have such wrong ideas; but as soon as they are seized by dangerous sickness, they seek their safeguard, and ask themselves for that sacrament which Jesus Christ has instituted for them, being well assured that they will receive from it great blessings for the soul, and also, if it be the will of God, a power of healing for the body.

Extreme Unction is administered by means of holy oil, consecrated by the bishops on Holy Thursday, and called the Oil of the Infirm. Our Lord instituted this sacrament, just as He instituted all the rest; and the Apostle St. James, in an Epistle which he addressed to the early Christians, reminds them of this unction for the dying, and charges them to call in the priests to administer it in all cases of serious illness.

The priest first recites, over the sick person, some preparatory prayers; then he makes, with the holy oil, different unctions, in the form of a cross, upon the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the lips, the hands, and the feet of the sick person, saying, at each anointing, "May the Lord by this holy anointing, and by His own most tender mercy, pardon thee whatever sin thou hast committed by thy sight, hearing," or by the other senses. And Our Lord applies successively to the sick person, by the outward sign of these anointings, the merits of His life and of His death, and purifies each one of the senses of the dying. At the time of receiving Extreme Unction, it is the custom to receive also the Holy Viaticum—that is, to communicate for the last time. Holy Communion, when received as Viaticum, is distinguished by this particular, that it is not necessary to be fasting to receive the Body of Jesus Christ.

After the Viaticum and Extreme Unction, the sick person should be left to commune in silence with God, or it would be even better to help him to profit by the two sacraments which he has just received, by suggesting to him from time to time some holy thought, and speaking some few simple words of prayer, such as these: "My God, how merciful Thou art, I love and thank Thee!—Jesus, my Saviour, all my hopes are in Thee, and I love Thee with my whole heart!—O holy Virgin Mary, Mother of my Saviour, I place myself under thy protection; pray for me, a sinner!"

And thus the Christian soul shall be at peace, happy and resigned, even in the midst of bodily pains; and thus the love of God shall transform the natural horrors of the last agony and death into a calm, sweet hope, a patient waiting for the life that lies beyond the portals of the grave.

THE FEAR OF EXTREME UNCTION.

CAN you imagine that there are in the world people so foolish as to believe that there is nothing so dangerous for a sick person as to allow him to see a priest—as if the priest were not the messenger of God, charged to comfort those who suffer, to pardon sins, to drive away remorse, and to restore to the soul the best and sweetest possessions humanity knows—peace and hope! Alas! how blind are the people to whom I speak, and they are not a few. For the body they spare nothing. They are not afraid of frightening the sick person by the doctor's frequent visits, or by serious consultations, although these things cannot fail to warn him that he is in danger;

and not only this, they do much more—they force upon him one remedy after another; they insist, they entreat, they weary him on the subject of his health; they spare no expense; they shrink from no difficulty, no suffering.

Now go and say to them: "Take care, your friend is growing suspicious; he is beginning to feel alarmed. You must be careful to create no painful impression upon his mind; it might possibly cause or hasten his death; wait until he is worse." How quickly they would answer that the first thing to be thought of was to save his life, and that that was the one thing they must endeavor to do even at the risk of frightening him and of doing him some temporary harm! And they would be perfectly and unquestionably right.

But for the unhappy soul it is a different matter; and yet it is often far more diseased than the body. Perhaps for many years it has abandoned its service to God, and forgotten its eternity.

The priest is the physician sent by Jesus Christ to secure and save it. And yet there seems to be but one fear, one dread—to see the priest approach the sick. It is delayed until the very last minute. "It would have such a dangerous effect upon him," they say. "To speak to any one so ill about confession and extreme unction is quite sufficient to kill him at once! We must wait until he is past feeling or knowing much about it—all in good time."

Very admirable prudence, indeed! Call in the doctor when the sick man is in the agony of death; call in the confessor when he is no longer able to confess; call in the priest when his presence is utterly useless. There is something to be done that would give you still less trouble; simply this—do not call in the priest at all, proclaim openly that you trouble yourselves neither about God nor about eternity; then let your dying die—like dogs!

What is the meaning of such unworthy conduct? What is the meaning of such cruelty, such irreligion? Could any words be sufficiently forcible to blight the fatal prejudice which has lost, still loses, and will again lose, so many miserable souls?

The experience of every day is sufficient to prove its falsity, but all this counts for nothing; the sick are constantly seen to weep for joy after having received the last consolations of religion, but still in vain; and still we see whole families, pretending to be Christians, join in a kind of league against the priest, to prevent him from saving the soul of a father, mother, child, or friend, and from preparing that soul to appear before the judgment seat of God! And then, when it is too late, and the priest justly reproaches the deluded

family, "He was so good!" they say. "He was such an upright, honorable man!" "She was such a virtuous woman!" "He led an irreproachable life!" "She loved her children so much!" "There is nothing to fear!" . . . And perhaps for ten or twenty years the unhappy dead had forgotten Jesus Christ, and neglected the most essential duties of the Christian life!

No, no; understand this, once for all, and tell it to the whole world: the dying, themselves, have no fear of the priest. His visit never kills them! On the contrary, it saves them! if they must die, it saves their soul! and if their sickness is not mortal, it comforts and strengthens them as nothing else could do.

This is our daily experience, and a thousand instances might be quoted to prove its truth. Some may remember the frightful accident that happened in 1842 on the railroad between Paris and Versailles. The passenger-train was overturned, and the whole of the carriages were shattered in pieces and dashed one upon another. A few instants after this terrible accident nothing was to be seen but a confused heap of broken carriages and mangled bodies, all drenched with the boiling water from the engine, and covered with burning coals which were rapidly reduced to ashes. In the first carriages some few persons alone escaped from this frightful disaster. These unfortunate people were dragged out with much difficulty from the midst of the burning rubbish. Five or six priests, professors and directors of the seminary of Issy, which is close to the railroad, passed the night in rendering the most devoted services to the victims. One among them related to me, how when the night was nearly over, and he was preparing to return to the seminary, a man came to inform him that a young pupil of the École Polytechnique had been just received into a large house which he pointed out, and had been so severely burnt that his life could not possibly be saved. The priest turned his steps immediately in the direction of this house. He requested the servants to say that he wished to speak to the master of the house. A lady instantly came forward to speak to him. He explained how he had just heard that she had had the charity to receive into her house one of the victims of that night's accident, and asked if there were any chance of saving his life. The lady hesitated, and made many difficulties, but the priest insisted: she acknowledged that the unfortunate youth appeared to be at the point of death; but added immediately that she could not take upon herself the responsibility of allowing him to see a priest, as it would be too great a shock, and might possibly kill him, etc., and all the

stereotyped excuses, exactly as we have described. But the priest, conscious only of a soul to be saved, urged his request with renewed energy, until at last the lady consented, with a very ill grace, to ask the youth if he desired to see a priest.

After a few moments he was requested to go in. "Scarcely had I appeared at the threshold of the door," he said to me, "when I saw the poor youth raise himself with difficulty from his bed of suffering and stretch out his hand to me. I drew near. It was a horrible sight. He was so frightfully burnt, so terribly swollen and disfigured, that not a single feature could be distinguished. He was suffering a martydom of pain. The lady of the house had remarked the movement that he had made on first seeing me, and I could perceive that she herself and those who were assisting were very much surprised.

"'My child,' I said at once to the poor young man, without being in the least disturbed by the presence of those who were in the room, 'I am come to receive your confession, to bring you the pardon of God, and peace to your soul.' He clasped his hands with an indescribable expression of happiness. Although perfectly conscious, he was not able to speak. I sent every one away. I agreed with the unfortunate young man that he should press my hand in answer to the questions that I was about to ask him; and in this manner I received his confession. . . .

"When it was ended I recalled the mistress of the house, and those persons who were helping her in nursing the sufferer; and I then profited by this occasion to point out to them how culpable, and how utterly unfounded was the prejudice which had urged them to oppose my wishes; and they were unable to make any reply. I then sent for the holy viaticum and extreme unction. The dying youth received these last tokens of God's mercy and love with a devotion which drew tears from all who witnessed it, and two hours after, his soul, reconciled to God, entered into eternity."

Was the young soldier afraid of the priest? and were not those who repulsed him grievously mistaken?

One other fact. Nothing is so powerful as facts. On a certain Shrove Tuesday some years ago, I was myself called in to a sick child whose life had been given up by the physician. The poor mother had no hope. Those signs which are the constant forerunners of death were already stamped upon the face of her little one. I gave him the last sacraments, heard his confession, and administered to him, as viaticum, his first communion — his first and last, alas!

they said. The child lay with his little hands clasped together during this sad and touching ceremony, and when I asked him if he were happy, he exerted all his feeble strength to answer with a smile, "Yes, father, . . . very . . . happy." I comforted the poor mother to the best of my power, pressed a farewell kiss on the pallid forehead of the child, and left him, never hoping to see him again. . . .

The following day the doctor was surprised to find his patient still living. But what was his bewilderment, when, upon a closer examination, he discovered that the fever had entirely disappeared, as well as all the symptoms of death which he had noticed the day before. It was inexplicable. Three days after, the little one, recalled to life, was playing with his brother. Had extreme unction and holy viaticum caused the child to die?

Then dismiss from your mind, henceforth, these foolish prejudices, both on your own acount and that of others. Do not fear the priest in sickness more than in health. When you are rather seriously ill, send for him at first; seek the consolations of religion, and try to induce all who are sick to do the same. Be in readiness for anything that may happen, and make your peace with God. Those who have procured a passport are not forced to start upon a journey.

HOLY ORDER.

HOLY ORDER is the sacrament instituted by the Son of God, Our Lord Jesus Christ, for the consecration or ordination of priests.

Although you may not be a priest, it will not be useless to devote some few moments to speaking of the sacraments of Holy Order, and of the priesthood, to the end that you may have a truer knowledge of what your priests really are, and may feel how deeply you should reverence their sacred calling, and with how great a confidence you should seek from their holy ministry all the help you need to know and to practise the law of God, to live a Christian life, and to save your own soul.

Jesus Christ is the Sovereign Priest, that is to say, the Sovereign Mediator between God and man, and the Sovereign Sanctifier of the world. Jesus Christ came down to earth to teach men the knowledge of the one true God; to teach men religion, the one true religion, and to give them the means to avoid sin, to save their souls, and to attain to everlasting life.

Before leaving this world He chose twelve disciples, whom He

named Apostles, or envoys, and to them He communicated the great mission which He had received from His heavenly Father. "As the Father hath sent Me," He said to them, "I also send you. All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

The Apostles were therefore the first ministers of Jesus Christ. They, in their turn, consecrated other bishops and other priests in all those countries through which they journeyed preaching the Gospel; and thus our own bishops and priests descend, by an uninterrupted succession, from the Apostles and from Jesus Christ Himself, in whose power they likewise participate. And it is for this reason that we owe them an infinite reverence, since in their person we reverence Jesus Christ Himself. If sometimes they are not as perfect as their sacred vocation demands, we must remember that, although they are priests, they are still men, and are consequently subject to err like other men. By the grace of God, it is rare to see a priest fail grievously in his duties; and, as a rule, it is calumny alone which levels its attacks against the priesthood.

The sacrament of Holy Order, by which priests are ordained, is conferred by the Bishop alone. The Bishop is as the spiritual father of priests, and of all the faithful; and priests, who are in their turn the spiritual fathers of Christians, are like to the eldest sons of the Bishop.

Nothing is more solemn and more imposing than an ordination. This is the name given to that ceremony by which the Bishop confers the sacrament of Holy Order; the priesthood is not immediately attained; the Church, in her wisdom, requires many years of preparation from those who are destined to the sacred ministry. She initiates them little by little in the knowledge and the virtues of their holy calling, and requires them to pass through many grades, of which the deaconry and sub-deaconry are the principal.

Young men are sub-deacons only until the age of twenty-one, after which they are irrevocably engaged in the service of God by the vow of perpetual chastity. No one can be a priest until the age of twenty-four, nor a Bishop until thirty years of age.

The principal function of the priest is to pray to God in the name of all men, and to offer to Him the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which

is called the Mass. The breviary or divine office is that daily prayer to which all priests are bound, and which they recite, not only on their own account, but in the name of all Christians and of the whole world. Thence they draw that holiness, charity, and self-devotion which they need, in order to fulfil efficaciously the second of their duties, viz., the sanctification of souls. For it is to sanctify and to save men that priests, in the name of Jesus Christ, teach religion, make known to all the law of God, administer the sacraments, remit sins, and fulfil all other offices of the sacerdotal ministry. He that heareth them, heareth Jesus Christ; he that rejects them, rejects salvation and eternal life.

Let us pray to God to send us good priests. A good priest is like Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ the saviour and benefactor of all who approach him. The sacrament of Holy Order is thus useful to ourselves; and it is through this sacrament that we have the knowledge of God, and are able to practise His holy law, and that we are not deprived, like so many unhappy souls, of the light and the peace of the true religion.

THE PRIEST.

THERE is in the midst of us a man little appreciated, too often little loved, and sometimes frightfully calumniated, and yet who is, nevertheless, just the one man who is most worthy of the reverence and confidence of all. This man is the Christian priest—the consoler of all who suffer, and the friend of all the friendless; and it is against him that the scoffing and the irreligious, enemies of God and of society, constantly endeavor to prejudice the minds of men.

The priest is attacked in this manner only because he is the minister of God. The man who would have no God, would also have no priest; and, knowing that he is powerless to impose silence upon this inconvenient preacher of the divine law, he seeks to expel him, or at least to rob him of the confidence of men in order to paralyze his ministry.

The priest has been sent to his brethren by Jesus Christ, even as He himself was sent. "Even as My Father hath sent Me," said Jesus to the Apostles, His first priests, "I also send you!" Jesus was sent to save the world by the sacrifice of Himself, to enlighten it by His teaching, and to console it by His mercy. And thus He sends His priests to save, instruct, console, and sanctify their brethren; or rather, He Himself fulfils, by means of His priests,

His divine and beneficent mission, speaking by their mouth and developing by their sacred ministry His divine life in the midst of men. Ministers of God though they are, priests are, however, men. Therefore they are not perfect. Still more, they can, if forgetful of their holy vocation, fall like the rest of us into serious faults; but their priestly character is no less worthy of our reverence; and we should always carefully distinguish between the man and the priest. Weakness and error are proper to man, and we must condemn them in the priest as in all other men; but the ministry of souls, the duty of teaching the law of God, the power of administering holy things, of celebrating Mass, of absolving from sin, in one word, the priesthood, are proper to the priest, as the representative of God, and are independent of the virtue or the negligence of him who holds this sacred trust. We should not forget that there was one Judas among the twelve Apostles; and when we reflect on human weakness, we have reason to thank God that there are so few priests forgetful of their duties and unworthy of their vocation.

Let men say what they please; there is one fact, which is perfectly apparent and perfectly undeniable. Our priests are, as a rule, notwithstanding the many imperfections imputed to them, and which are almost always greatly exaggerated, far better than other men. They are more charitable to the unfortunate, they lead a purer life—a more virtuous life, a life more in conformity with the law of God—than are the lives of those who surround them, and who often cry out most loudly against them. In fact, how can their life be defined if not as a life of self-devotion and of good works?

By teaching our children to fear God, to love Him, and to serve Him, do they not constitute themselves the most effectual, the only effectual, guardians of the innocence and virtue of our names? Where is the father or mother who could be unwilling for the priest to tell his child to be pure, to shrink from evil, to be dutiful and obedient, to fulfil his duties, and to pray to God—in one word, to be a Christian? Where is the man who could fear to have such counsel given to his wife? And is it not pure wickedness to call so salutary an influence intrigue, and scheming, and intermeddling in family secrets?

People sometimes complain that the priest lives like a gloomy recluse, shut out from society. But whose fault is this? Is it not the fault of society itself, which by listening to false insinuations builds up a wall of separation against the priest? And then, men of the world, so indulgent, so forbearing to themselves, when pronouncing

their strictures on the priest, become suddenly transformed into the most severe and rigorous of mankind. Let him do what he will, they are never at a loss for something to condemn. If he is genial, conversational, and at ease in society, they say he is fond of the world, and has mistaken his vocation; if, on the contrary, he is grave and reserved, they call him a bear, and pronounce him insufferable.

What is the minister of God to do in the midst of such extremes? He must do exactly what he does—he must patiently endure the foolish and contradictory accusations from which he has to suffer; he must do the right, as in the sight of God; he must give to the world the light of a pure example, and save the souls of men by a life of true self-sacrifice.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL VOCATION.

THE word vocation means simply calling. Those who are called by God to the ecclesiastical state have a vocation; those who are not called have no vocation, and should not become priests.

A vocation, as a rule, consists in the possession of certain qualities, dispositions, aptitudes, tastes, and inclinations, which render a man fit to follow one career rather than another. Thus men have vocations for the army, the navy, law, or commerce. All good and lawful vocations come from God, and lead to Him; they lead to Him because they are good; they come from Him because it is He who gives us, as our Creator, those dispositions, qualities, and lawful desires which, altogether, constitute our vocation.

Every man has a vocation here below; every man is destined to fill some place, more or less distinctive, in the midst of his fellow-men, and is destined, moreover, by a faithful fulfilment of the will of God in this place, to save his soul and attain to heaven. There are different vocations, just as there are different temperaments and constitutions. Those who would be well must first understand their constitution, and then take care of their health, which they feel that they need; just in the same way, those who would make the best of life should first discover and understand their particular vocation; hence, it is most important to study and examine seriously the groundwork of the individual mind and character. This study is one of the most binding duties of parents with regard to their children, and of priests toward the penitents whom they direct, and, lastly, it is the duty which we all owe to ourselves when we arrive at the age in

which we become truly responsible for our actions and for the whole course of our future lives.

To each particular vocation God attaches special graces, which are only bestowed on those who seek to learn and faithfully follow their vocation, which, consequently, becomes a duty of the highest importance, since it tends to eternal salvation.

The holiest, the noblest, the most divine of all vocations is the vocation to the priesthood. This truly consists of certain dispositions of the heart and mind, of certain qualities and inclinations which indicate that a child or a man will at some future day be fitted to fill worthily the priestly office. This vocation comes from God more directly than any other, since Our Lord alone, by the powerful attraction of His grace, can fill the heart of a young man with the earnest desire to consecrate himself to the divine service, and to embrace that holy routine of prayer, and sacrifice, and self-devotion which constitutes the life of the true priest.

As regards mental capabilities, it is necessary that a young man, to be truly called to the priesthood, should possess a clear judgment, upright and equitable principles, and an intelligence which is, at least, equal to the average; in short, he must be capable of earnest, persevering study. If a priest possess a large amount of talent and intellect, it is all the better, but that is only desirable, and not indispensable.

As regards disposition, it is necessary to be kind, compassionate, and capable of self-denial in order to become a priest. A priest without such virtues would be as a body without life, as a fire which gives no heat. A selfish, unamiable child, however bright and intelligent, is not fitted to be a priest.

As regards character, a very important point and one which is often overlooked, it is necessary that a young man who desires to become a priest should begin by vigorously fighting against, and effectually overcoming, certain grave defects of character which render even a virtuous man obnoxious to his neighbors. What future good is likely to be done in the priestly office by an irritable, capricious, or eccentric man, or by a weak, melancholy, indolent man; or, again, by a man who has only base and shallow ideas, and is utterly destitute of anything like real elevation of thought and feeling? or, lastly, by a heedless, thoughtless man, loquacious, fickle, and inconsistent. Such characteristics as these are little in accordance with the sacred garb and calling of the priest.

Mind, and heart, and character; such is the triple point of view

from which the idea of a religious vocation should, from the first, be regarded.

There are certain outward circumstances which should also be taken into account, because they are very important, and sometimes absolutely essential: among others, appearance, family, antecedents, and means.

Appearance; because, while it is not in the least necessary that a priest should be handsome, it is quite necessary that he should be neither ridiculous nor deformed. Therefore, even with sufficient means, a good disposition, and a faultless character, a child or a man who had a prominent hump, a grotesque figure, or any striking disfigurement, would be for that reason alone disqualified for the priesthood. Health is a serious obstacle only when it would prevent study, or render any one unable to perform the essential duties of the holy ministry. Family may also exclude a vocation: thus, a name justly dishonored, relations justly disgraced, form as a rule an almost invincible obstacle. It is the same with regard to antecedents; a liberated convict, a thief from a prison, may never dream of becoming a priest. If any one had been so unhappy as to lead a wicked life, and to give scandal, it would be quite necessary to efface the very memory of the past by years of penitence and by a holy Christian life, before daring to assume the robe of an ecclesiastic. And, lastly, means; pecuniary difficulties may be almost always overcome, if the vocation be, in all other respects, clear and unquestionable. Sometimes, however, extreme poverty may oblige a young man to renounce his desire for the priesthood, in order to support his family, and to provide himself with the simple necessaries of life.

Those who have good reason to believe that they have a religious vocation should submit the decision of this grave question to the examination and the judgment of an enlightened confessor, and, except in very exceptional cases, the best thing to do is to render a willing obedience.

Parents should act with the greatest circumspection in regard to their children upon this subject of a vocation. There are two extremes to avoid—never to interfere with a real vocation, and never to urge a child indiscreetly into a life for which he is not intended. In either case they would be guilty of a great sin. They are certainly permitted, and indeed it is their duty, to give much thought to the vocation of their children, and to discuss it seriously with the priest who directs them, and to gain all possible help and security; but any definite decision on this subject is entirely beyond their

power, and it is the Church alone who can declare whether there is or is not a vocation.

Sometimes the evident signs of a vocation show themselves very early in life. There are priests who can never remember having had any other desire than that of consecrating themselves to the service of God. But in other cases, the divine call is not heard until later in life, at the time of the first communion, for instance, or upon the occasion of some great grief; or at the age of eighteen or twenty, in the midst of the pleasures of the world; or later still, and owing to apparently casual and trifling circumstances, which it would be impossible to enumerate, and of which the secret belongs to God alone. Usually, however, a vocation manifests itself in youth, or, at least, in early manhood.

A vocation may be lost: it should therefore be cultivated, preserved, developed, and strengthened with extreme vigilance. A blow from a stone or a stick is sometimes sufficient to break the branch of a fruit-tree, and to prevent it forever from following its vocation, which was to bear one day both flowers and fruit; thus we have seen dawning vocations, of a very decided nature, entirely disappear by reason of one single serious infidelity. At other times, strange and inexplicable as it is, we have seen vocations resist every shock and every possible blow; like plants which we are startled to find living beneath ruins which seem ready to stifle and crush out their life.

What should be done to preserve a vocation, and to strengthen it in the heart? To begin with, all manner of sin should be avoided as much as possible; also worldly pleasures, frivolous books, worthless and dissipated society; an endeavor should be made to live amid good influences and with those whose character and example would have only a salutary effect, to pray very much, to have much love for the Blessed Sacrament, which is the one central attraction in the life of the priest, to communicate as often as possible; and lastly, to work well in order to be admitted without too much delay into the seminary, that special asylum of vocations to the priesthood.

The confessor and the parents of a youthful candidate for the sacred ministry should endeavor to lead him in the safe and narrow way here pointed out by every means in their power.

It is a great happiness and grace for any family to give a priest to God. It is a higher honor than that of royalty; the priest is the king of souls, the true father of the people, the guardian of the truth and justice upon earth; anointed of God. Blessed is the child whom the Lord deigns to call to the priestly office. Blessed is the family of

the little elect. Let him choose without fear the better part. It is the most sublime, and the sweetest; it is the most Divine, and the simplest; thus, where responsibilities abound, graces also abound, and this vocation to a more perfect life is, essentially, only a vocation to a nobler, truer, purer happiness; it is the mark of a more tender love.

MATRIMONY.

MATRIMONY is a contract instituted by God from the beginning of the world, by which a man and woman give themselves freely and irrevocably to each other as husband and wife. Matrimony is therefore a sacred and a religious contract, and is of a far higher nature than any other contract common among men. It is irrevocable when a free consent has been once given upon both sides; it is beyond recall, and the union is for life.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to sanctify the world in order to save it, did not forget marriage, the foundation of human society and the basis of family life. This contract, already holy and sacred, was raised by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament. Therefore, among Christians, marriage is an essentially religious act, a source of grace and sanctification for the faithful husband and wife, and its violation is not only an injustice, but an undoubted sacrilege.

In the eyes of Christians and of the Church there is but one true and legitimate marriage, that which is contracted according to the law of God, in the presence of God's minister, and in obedience to the rules laid down by the Church.

A marriage, to be valid, must be contracted in the presence of the parish priest and of two witnesses. When the persons presenting themselves to be married have been interrogated by the priest as to their free and voluntary consent to take each other mutually for husband and wife, and have both answered in the affirmative, they are forever united, they have received the sacrament of matrimony, and commit a mortal sin if their hearts are not prepared for this solemn religious act.*

In order to receive this sacrament aright, it is necessary to prepare for it by prayer and by a good confession; and in many countries

* In England and the United States, the contracting of marriage otherwise than before the priest and two witnesses, though illicit and sinful is not necessarily invalid; for the Decree of the Council of Trent on Clandestine Marriages, not having been published in those countries, is, therefore, by virtue of a provision in the Decree itself not binding upon persons living therein.

the faithful are not only exhorted, but are commanded to receive the holy communion before marriage. It is best to make this preparation in good time, and not to wait until the very day of marriage before fulfilling this important duty. In large towns where there are so many workmen who are both indifferent and ignorant with regard to religion, this culpable negligence is not uncommon; and if there are many miserable homes, it is greatly to this want of preparation that we must attribute the curse which seems to rest upon them.

Are you married? Make your home a happy one, and to do this be a Christian. Bear patiently with the faults and imperfections of your wife; and, wives, bear patiently with the imperfections of your husbands. Be sure that God reserves for you much joy and happiness in your union, and that He has raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament only to render it a source of grace and benediction. If He send you children, bring them up in the knowledge and practice of religion; teach them by example before teaching them by words, and live in such manner in their sight that you may never need to teach them to honor and to love you. Let your family be a model of order, peace, and virtue; this, believe me, is the surest and simplest means of acquiring lasting happiness.

In the Catholic Church the bond or tie of marriage cannot be dissolved; "what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Spiritual authority can, for important reasons, allow a husband and wife to live separated from one another; but nevertheless they continue married people, even though the civil court should grant them a divorce. Neither of them can validly contract a second marriage while the other party is living.

There are two kinds of impediments that render marriage unlawful, or null. Marriage is made unlawful by entering into it during the forbidden times; or by having taken a vow of chastity, or by a promise of marriage to another, etc. Such marriages, however, while unlawful are not invalid. Marriages are rendered null, from the beginning, through relationship and kindred to the fourth degree inclusive, spiritual affinity, etc. A dispensation, however, in such cases, may be obtained from the bishop of the diocese.

For just and weighty reasons the Church disapproves of mixed marriages—that is, marriages contracted between Catholics and non-Catholics; and she permits them only under certain conditions, namely: That the Catholic party be allowed the free exercise of religion; and that all children born of the union be brought up in the Catholic faith. Mixed marriages are never contracted or blessed in

the Church. In case one party is not even baptized, this should be made known before, as it is an impediment that renders the marriage null.

BEFORE MARRIAGE.

It is a very serious thing to marry. To a great many people marriage resembles a kind of perpetual treadmill; they are in despair at the dreary prospect of being forever bound to one another; they tear their hair (figuratively speaking), and would give the whole world to be able to recall the fatal Yes, and to utter in its place a distinct and unhesitating No. . . . Vain regrets! this union is for life. Therefore, before entering into marriage, let us reflect very seriously on what we are about to do, that we may not prepare for ourselves, like so many others, a miserable future.

The following suggestions, if acted upon, are calculated to prevent many bitter awakenings: they bear chiefly upon three important questions. 1st, Shall I marry? 2d, Whom shall I marry? 3d, When I have chosen, how shall I prepare for marriage?

1st, Shall I marry? Do not deceive yourself. The marriage state is usually far more difficult, and far harder than that of celibacy. The unmarried are responsible only for their own acts, and there is no one to share the burden of their troubles, failures, and mistakes. Once married, this responsibility is extended to the husband or the wife, who usually finds this burden slightly insupportable. Besides, it is very difficult to find perfection in a husband or a wife; the education of each has been different, and their ideas are not the same; "*l'un aime le vinaigre, l'autre prefère l'huile*," from all of which spring tears, disputes, and constant discord. While unmarried, everything went smoothly; the daily requirement was simple enough, but now there are more expenses, and hardly more receipts, hence difficulties arise, and it is a question how to make the two ends meet.

In short, the state of marriage is a difficult one; it brings great duties and heavy burdens; it is a yoke which no one can shake off who has once submitted to it; all should reflect seriously before deciding to accept it, but it is a source of much happiness, and sometimes of salvation.

Supposing that I have answered this question, Shall I marry, with an affirmative, what is the next thing to be done?

Whom shall I marry? Ah! this is no trifling question! To

choose a husband, to choose a wife! Which is the prize in the lottery! If in a lottery we could always gain the prize, if we could but be sure of drawing the winning number, then lottery would be a very delightful thing; alas! it is so far from delightful that almost every one finds it a most ruinous affair. In that human lottery which we call marriage, men almost always lose, and they who chance upon the winning number may be regarded as phenomena. And why is this? The real cause lies in the carelessness and utter want of consideration that is shown by many when about to choose the man, or the woman, to whom they desire to unite the whole of their future destiny. In order to choose well, there are three things to be seriously considered. The person, family, and means.

The person. Is this young girl fitted for my wife, and will our union be productive of happiness? Is she good and sweet and unselfish? Does she possess the beauty of holiness, and the charm of Christian graces? Is she conscientious and well-informed? Has she been carefully brought up with simple, womanly tastes? Is she free from the too common bane of idleness and inactivity? Has she anything in her favor beyond the attractions of youth, and the girlish gayety which charms at first, but which is, after all, but as the sparkling of champagne?

How bitter an awakening follows after marriage, when a man has neglected to ask himself such questions as these. It often happens that he has chosen his wife for appearance only; he saw that she was attractive, and believed that she was perfect. . . . Alas! where is this perfection now? He finds himself tied forever to a nature utterly antagonistic to his own, to a discontented, passionate, self-willed woman, or to some foolish, brainless girl, who only dreams of dress and pleasure, or even to a dull and stupid woman, who will yet contrive to render him entirely miserable. The case is not a different one with regard to husbands; a girl will consent to marry a man only for the sake of a handsome face, a good figure, and a fund of agreeable conversation. Is he a Christian? Does he conscientiously fulfil his religious duties, the only surety for the fulfilment of all other duties? Is he a good son? Is he a man of pure morality and unblemished honor? Will his past life furnish a pledge for the future? But the heedless, thoughtless girl puts all such questions carelessly aside, in eagerness to plunge into those unknown waters which are hereafter destined to close relentlessly above her head. "But he is a Protestant!" exclaim her friends. "That is nothing; I will convert him." "But from his childhood he has neglected the

sacraments, and is in fact utterly without religion!" "Oh! when he is married, it will be quite different." "But he has led a very worthless life, and is reckless and extravagant!" "With me he will be quite reformed." "But he has a violent temper, and is indolent and very hard to please!" "Do not say any more; I love him, and intend to marry him." "Take your own course, then. In a year or two you will speak very differently."

Family.—Those who marry are forced to adopt, willingly or unwillingly, the family of their husband or their wife. Here also is a subject for consideration. It is quite necessary to consider whether you are about to enter into an honorable and a Christian family. Too often a shining varnish covers a bad picture; therefore it is well to be careful before forming any such close connection, and quite necessary to be thoroughly acquainted with everything concerning the family into which you desire to enter; there is nothing to be more carefully avoided than a connection with any family of ill-repute, or of a dishonored name, since such an association could scarcely fail to have a most baneful effect upon your own life, to poison the very springs of honor or of conscience, and to lower your own reputation. There are people who appear to marry only with a view to the father-in-law whose social position and influence will be most likely to form a stepping-stone in their own calling or career. In such cases it is the father-in-law whom they should marry, and not the daughter.

Means.—Here we behold the sinews of marriage still more than the sinews of war! Is it an uncommon custom to measure the worth of any young marriageable woman, or of certain young marrying men, by the value and extent of their fortune? She will have money, therefore she is a very desirable wife. He has scarcely any means, therefore I could not marry him. I know well that the question of money is one of real importance both in marriage and throughout life. I do not intend to say that no one should give it any thought: all I say is, that money is not sufficient, and that a Christian, a man who respects himself, is forbidden to marry a fortune, let its dimensions be what they may.

Money should never be regarded but as an accessory; and if there are certain trivial defects which may be passed over, no one should be willing to pass over any lack of the essential requirements of religion, good personal qualities, health, and a fair name. Those who find all these united may make a perfect marriage. This is the prize, the most rare prize, which all should seek to obtain.

But if, after all, you are bent upon marrying for the sake of fortune or of family, let me warn you that you will find it needful to be wise in your generation, for poor human nature is not always to be trusted, and the rapid progress of liberty of conscience leaves ever a wider and a wider margin. Your matrimonial prospects may appear most brilliant, your friends may esteem you a most enviable man, you may step with proud elation upon that matrimonial bridge, which appears to lead you straight to the earthly felicity on which your longing gaze is fixed as upon a veritable land of promise—and lo! the rotten timbers give way beneath your eager tread, and the golden apples you have barely clutched crumble to dust and ashes. You will therefore find it wise to take all the precautions I have suggested if you would escape making a lamentable choice; if you would escape being plunged into the waters of a matrimonial martyrdom, from which, looking over a dreary, weary waste, you will behold your distant Canaan fade, mirage-like, from view.

The third question:—I wish to marry, I have made my choice; what remains for me to do before pronouncing the irrevocable Yes? There is the religious preparation, that must be always made before receiving the sacrament of marriage and entering into that sacred contract of which the Church alone is the mistress and the guardian.

This religious preparation is of the highest importance for all who desire to receive a sacrament, and to receive it worthily. One or two weeks before the appointed day, it is necessary to go to confession in order to be prepared to receive absolution the day before the marriage. If any one dared to present themselves at the foot of the altar without having received this sacred absolution, they would commit a sacrilege, quite as serious, quite as fatal, as that of a bad first communion. An excellent practice, and one that cannot be too strongly recommended to the faithful who are preparing themselves for this holy contract, is to communicate together, side by side, on the day before their marriage.

Finally, it is the absolution of the priest, and that alone, which can give a clear conscience and purify the soul. Such are the preparations, such are the three different phases through which every child of Israel must pass who aspires to the promised land.

THE MARRIAGE DAY.

THE all-important day is then arrived. Israel stands by the shore of the matrimonial Jordan. Jordan, in Hebrew, signifies the river

of Eden, the river of gladness. What a happy augury! But unfortunately the Philistines are upon the other side. . . .

The dress and appearance of the bride and bridegroom are every thing that can be desired; all the bridesmaids are charming; immemorial custom proclaims it loudly; and neither are the groomsmen to be despised. Everything is rose-colored upon such a day as this! They enter the church, not to receive a simple benediction, as some appear to believe, but to contract marriage in the face of the Church and of her minister.

Every marriage must be celebrated by the parish priest alone. The presence of any other priest is not sufficient unless he have the consent and authority of the parish priest. This rule, laid down by the Church, is so absolute in those countries* where it prevails, that the marriage would be invalid if it were not observed; the Church also commands that those about to be married should be accompanied by many witnesses; two at least are necessary, and there should be a greater number.

It is the custom to hear Mass immediately after the ceremony of marriage, which is in itself very simple; the priest turns toward the bride and bridegroom, who are kneeling at the foot of the altar, the husband on the right, the wife on the left. After a short exhortation designed to prepare them to receive worthily the sacrament of marriage, and to remind them of the solemn duties which that sacrament is about to impose upon them, the priest asks successively of the man and of the woman, if they desire to take each other mutually for husband and wife, and both must answer in a clear and intelligible voice. Even then it is possible to say No—a thing which has sometimes been known; but as soon as both have pronounced the word Yes, they are married, married for life, indissolubly married, married until death. The blessing of the priest and the *conjungo* are only the official declaration of the marriage that has been contracted, and its promulgation in the name of the Church. It is therefore the mutual consent which forms the contract, and of which the sacrament of marriage may be said to consist.

If any one were to be married without being in a state of grace they would, I repeat, commit a sacrilege; they would receive a sacrament, but they would not receive the grace of the sacrament; they would be married, but this marriage, instead of being blessed by God, would be cursed from this very beginning. The special grace bestowed by this sacrament is the grace of sanctification, of

*See note, p. 139.

mutual love, of strength, and of purity, which accompanies the man and the woman through the whole course of their lives, and enables them to become holy amidst all the temptations which may possibly assail them.

During the interrogations of the priest, the bride and bridegroom, still kneeling, give the right hand to each other as a sign of union. Also as a sign and a perpetual remembrance of this union, the husband places on the finger of his wife a blessed ring, a ring which is the first link in that chain which death alone can break.

Toward the end of the Mass, between the Pater and the Communion, the celebrant gives a solemn benediction to the bride and bridegroom, who kneel beneath a white veil which is held for some instants over their heads; this veil symbolizes mutual cohabitation, and the blessing of the Church in this state of life. This custom is not everywhere observed; but the benediction forms a part of the Mass.

When everything is ended they enter the sacristy, and the priest, the bride and bridegroom, and the witnesses all sign the registration of the marriage. And now the wedding festivities commence, and should be observed with perfect moderation and propriety. While following the customs of the country, it is at the same time a matter of conscience for those who have been newly married and for their family to allow nothing which the most strict morality could condemn. There, where it is the custom to dance at weddings, let them dance, but every amusement which might pass beyond the limits of allowable merry-making and of innocent joy must be scrupulously avoided. It is also quite essential that a great part of the night should not be foolishly passed in eating and drinking, and rushing wildly round and round. All innocent pleasure, they say. That is not true; and confessors can bear a sorrowful testimony to the reverse.

Neither are the wedding feasts, which are, as a rule, interminable and most extravagant, marked by a perfect innocence. It is not allowable at these more than at any other to eat and drink *ad libitum*. Gluttony is always reprehensible, and drunkenness is always ignominious. It is those who have eaten too much and have drunk too freely who fall into the excesses which are so common at these marriage festivals; unseemly jests, offensive songs, and senseless laughter, all as contrary to modesty as to good taste. It is in the spirit of religion, in the quiet consciousness of the presence of God, and in pure and innocent joy, that Christians should pass their marriage day.

AFTER MARRIAGE.

AFTER the roses, thorns; and on the rose-trees, how few the roses, and how many the thorns; in this sense all marriages are, like rose-trees, more or less garnished with thorns. What are these thorns? What are the duties which fall so heavily upon married people?

(1) Their common life and common cares. All husbands have their faults, all wives have theirs. During the first few months everything is perfection. "My husband is so kind and considerate!" "My wife is an angel of goodness!" . . . But in time the perfection of the husband evaporates, and only the husband "full of faults" remains; the "angel" loses one by one the gilded plumes of her wings, until the disappointed husband is finally brought face to face with a woman, far from perfect, a woman exactly similar to other women! What can he do then? Confronted by this hard reality, must he grow angry, irritable, and despondent? No, indeed; he must simply bear it. Understand this clearly: he must. It is a duty, a conjugal duty; one of the first requirements in the yoke of marriage.

"But my husband makes himself perfectly hateful; he is unreasonable, obstinate, and always ready for some dispute!" Bear with him patiently; you are his wife, and in spite of all his faults he is your husband. Bear with him, and, still more, obey him in all that wounds neither honor nor conscience. The wife, indeed, owes her husband not help and sympathy alone, but deference, submission, honor, and obedience. . . . "But my wife is the most trying of women; my patience is all gone; she is ill-tempered, jealous, absurd!" Bear with her. At the moment of your marriage you entered into a religious engagement before God, and before her, to bear with her whatever she might be. Live with her then as happily as possible, show her all the affection, all the kind consideration which she has a right to expect from you. It is by gentleness and not by violence that you may even yet derive much happiness from your marriage. "A drop of honey," says St. Francis of Sales, "attracts more flies than a cask of vinegar."

The every-day duties of life are not so simple as some appear to think. People need no small amount of virtue to enable them to adapt themselves willingly to each other in the thousand little details of ordinary existence. It is, as a rule, more difficult for two persons

to live together than for one to live alone; yet it is what all men and women must do when they enter upon married life.

(2) Conjugal fidelity. The husband or wife who should violate their oaths of fidelity would, by so doing, commit a horrible sin called adultery. This sin is so grievous that it is pursued even by the civil laws. It violates all the fundamental laws of family life, and introduces disorder and depravity there, where holy union, sworn fidelity, pure and unalterable love alone should reign. Further, let no one deceive themselves: conjugal chastity is a difficult duty. As regards morality, marriage is not a state exempt from danger; far from this, it is attended by serious peril, as people of experience know, and is, consequently, not only less perfect but less happy than the state of celibacy and Christian continency. This point was formally declared by the Council of Trent against Luther. In order to preserve intact their mutual fidelity, a husband and wife should keep as strict a watch over themselves as a young man and a young girl. The wife should avoid all coquetry, and should shrink from anything that could appear like an endeavor to attract the admiration or attention of men; the husband, on his side, should avoid every species of flirtation, and should renounce all those trifling immunities, at which the worldly only laugh, but which prove so often to be but the first steps in the execrable and shameless path of adultery; through which alone a husband and wife are allowed to separate forever. It need not be said that while either is living, the other, though lawfully separated, may form no other marriage bond. Chastity is only possible to the married, as to the unmarried, by the almighty power of religion, the practice of which is, here on earth, the source of every good.

(3). The care and education of children. The first end of marriage is, in the designs of God, the creation and generation of children. It is a great grace to give to God and to the Church children who are destined for paradise. Sterility has always been regarded as a misfortune; and therefore it is an unpardonable thing that husbands and wives should repine when God sends them many children, and those who basely recoil before the most sacred of burdens are unworthy of the honor which God deigns to bestow upon them, when He raises them to the almost divine rank of father and of mother. It is a truth, which has been universally accepted in all ages, that the blessing of God rest upon numerous families.

The principal duty of the father is to provide by his industry, his care, and his work, for the needs and the well-being of his wife and

children. After an undutiful son, there is nothing worse than a bad father.

The duties of the mother relate more directly to the management of the household, to the details of domestic cares, and to the greatest watchfulness in all that concerns her little children. It is she who should tend and nourish them, except when that is truly impossible; it is she, even more than the father, who should teach them, from their tenderest childhood, to clasp their little hands in prayer, to lisp the holy names of Jesus and of Mary, and to love their heavenly Father; she must spare no pains to bring up her children well, but must be ever ready to give them good advice, simple instructions, rewards, reproofs, and constant care by night and day. A bad mother would be an anomaly; happily there are very few.

The care of children, the third duty of marriage, continues throughout life, even when the children have grown up: the father and mother should always labor for their good and their salvation: the Christian family is nothing but a community for mutual help and love; a community in which all work for their common welfare here, and for eternal happiness hereafter. The sacrament of matrimony is the soul of every household; it is a fountain of life springing forth in the midst of every Christian home to fertilize, to vivify, and to cause it to bring forth abundant fruits of happiness and salvation. Jesus Christ, through the sacrament of matrimony, becomes the King of families, just as He is, through the sacrament of Holy Orders, the King of the Church.

THIRD PART

WHAT IT IS TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

Do my Christian readers clearly understand what it truly is to be a Christian?

It certainly is not, as some people with slightly confused ideas appear to imagine, merely to abstain from murdering or plundering your neighbor. To do this is just to escape being a villain, that is all.

To be a Christian is not merely to be a good father, a good husband, a good son, a good workman, an industrious and honorable man, a good comrade, etc.; that is only to be an honest man, and a Christian is something more than an honest man.

To be a Christian is not merely to respect religion, to consider it good and useful, to acknowledge that Christianity has inspired noble deeds; that is simply to judge fairly, and to possess the good sense of an intelligent man: in order to hold such opinions as these nothing is needed but to rise above vulgar prejudices, and to despise the pointless sneers of a shallow philosophy.

Lastly, to be a Christian is not merely to observe certain exterior practices, such as to hear Mass regularly, to abstain, or even to go to confession. These practices, although very excellent, are nevertheless only means by which to become and to remain a true Christian. Then what is the Christian life? and what is a true Christian?

A Christian is a baptized man, who believes with his whole heart all that is taught, in the name of Jesus Christ, by the Pope and the Bishops, who have been entrusted by the Saviour to spread the Christian religion throughout the world; a man, moreover, who observes, as far as human weakness will allow, all the commandments of God and the laws of the Church; and who earnestly strives to the best of his power to imitate Jesus Christ, his God, his Saviour, and his great example.

A Christian is a man who loves God before all things, who would choose to suffer anything rather than offend Him, who detests sin

in others, and still more in himself; he is a man who loves and practises the right, who battles constantly and perseveringly with all his evil passions, and who, in spite of the evil inclinations which will sometimes rage powerfully within him, is still pure and humble, patient and merciful, indulgent to the faults of others, patient and resigned in misfortune.

A Christian is a man who is constant in prayer, and who follows in the footsteps of his Lord and Master, and thus, ever looking to Jesus, learns from Him the daily lessons of virtue that he needs. He pardons his enemies, even as Jesus Christ pardoned His. Like Him he goes about doing good. He loves all men, but especially the poor, the forsaken, the insignificant. In prosperity his heart is ever detached from earth, and lifted up to that heavenly home where the only true good is to be found. In poverty and suffering he is calm and full of hope, remembering that to the sorrows of Calvary succeeds the joy of the resurrection, and that it is only through the cross that we can gain the crown.

A Christian, then, is a living copy of Jesus Christ; a man who loves what Jesus Christ loves, condemns what He condemns, and judges in all things as He judges; and in this man, His faithful servant, Jesus Christ Himself does, in a manner, still live and walk with men.

Such is the true Christian, such we all ought to be, such we should all become or remain!

There is no position in life in which it is impossible to be a Christian. In poverty or wealth, in health or sickness, in youth or age, it is all one; and we should each, without exception, be holy, and should model our lives by that perfect pattern which we have just sketched out. Are we true Christians? Do we possess that humility, that singleness of heart, that disinterestedness and that purity of life, which constitute the Christian character. Let the conscience of each one of us answer this question! Alas! mine does not respond to it very readily—and reader, what of yours?

Let us, then, take courage, and turn to the Lord our God. Pagans, perhaps, until now, let us make haste to become Christians! If our own weakness cause us to shrink from such great and serious duties, let us have recourse to that powerful aid which the mercy of God has placed in the bosom of the Church. Let us pray, let us frequent the sacraments, let us seek in the confession of our sins a remedy for the past, and in frequent communion strength for the future. Let us make a vigorous effort, nor shrink from any trouble

that is required of us by God; does He not deserve it from us? Life passes quickly! Let us work while it is day: blessed is that servant whom He shall find watching; a few hours of weariness, a few hours of brave and patient fighting, and then, to the passing trials of this earthly probation succeeds the eternal rest, the unutterable gladness promised by the Saviour.

WHY SO MANY UPRIGHT PEOPLE FAIL TO FULFIL THEIR RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

It is a fact, and one which is much to be regretted, that there are a great number of men and women of unblemished character, of great goodness of heart, and who are leading correct and peaceful lives, yet who do not fulfil their religious duties. They pray, in some cases at all events, with a certain amount of regularity; they do not ridicule religion; they even defend it when there is need; from time to time they hear Mass on Sunday; they abstain on Good Friday, and sometimes on all Fridays; they regard as of the highest importance that religious care by which the education of their children is surrounded; their feelings are deeply touched at the time of the first communion of their son or daughter; they would not die without the sacraments for any earthly consideration; their life appears irreproachable. Only one thing is wanting: they neither go to confession nor to holy communion. Is this a great evil when all other duties are faithfully accomplished? Yes, a great evil. A vessel fastened to the shore by an iron chain becomes, if a single link of this chain chance to be broken, the mere sport of the waves, and loses its only protection. God is our Saviour amidst all the perils of human life and the storm of human passions; the chain which binds us to Him, and consequently saves us, is religion; and even as a chain is made up of a succession of links, so religion is made up of a succession of obligations which form one complete whole, and are closely attached one to another. To break one single link, to violate one single precept of religion, is to separate ourselves from God, to lose the life of the soul, and to jeopardize our eternal salvation. The obligation for every Christian to confess regularly, and to communicate at least once a year, is an absolute and rigorous law, the violation of which is a mortal sin. Therefore, however unbroken the rest of the chain, if this double link is wanting, all is broken between ourselves and God; whatever the blamelessness, integrity, and morality of our lives in every other respect, this twofold duty being

omitted, the soul is separated from Jesus Christ; and if it remain in this state, is lost for all eternity. Therefore, not to confess, and not to communicate, is a very great evil, a most disastrous fault, and an utter folly. Now what is the reason that the people of whom I speak do not go to confession? Are they wanting in faith? Not the least in the world. Is it human respect which holds them back? Perhaps a little, but that is not the true cause of which I desire to speak, although that may be also, alas! a very frequent one. Have they not sufficient courage to acknowledge their faults? If not, they should summon courage, whatever it may cost them. What is it, then, which keeps them thus so often far from God? Two mere trifles, which are, nevertheless, sufficiently powerful to compass the sins of innumerable souls: Habit, and a certain embarrassment as to the manner in which they are to break through that routine into which they have allowed themselves to fall. How many men, returning to their duties after ten, twenty, and thirty years of neglect, would have fulfilled them long ago, if they had only known what to do in order to go to confession and to communion. They have been in the habit of meeting priests, but they have not known them intimately enough to open their hearts to them; and then they have been held back by a feeling of false shame in acknowledging that they have not confessed for so many years. Occasions have not presented themselves, or have passed unheeded, and with them passed the months and years; and the gulf grew deeper and deeper still.

It is probable that these words will be read by more than one to whom they will apply. As a true friend I would entreat all such to summon courage, and to live no longer in this practical oblivion of God. Your path is very clear and very simple; go to the first priest you can find; seek him either in his own house, or in the sacristy of his church; priests are well accustomed to such visits; tell him simply and frankly that you have neglected your religious duties, that you desire to make your confession, and that you will be glad if he will give you his help. I promise you a kind reception; you will soon know by sweet experience how happy a thing it is to be at peace with God.

THE RELIGION OF THE HONEST MAN.

THERE are a number of people who believe in the religion of honesty. It may not then be unnecessary to endeavor to point out

to them the true nature of this religion. But, my honest friend, what is your religion? In what does it consist? What does it command? What does it forbid?

And this brings us to the first embarrassment of those whose religion is in honesty. For if they reply that it consists in fulfilling all duties well, in doing good, and avoiding evil, we can convict them of weakness on all points.

Let us turn first to a young man of unworthy morals and dissolute life, who saddens his mother's heart and dishonors his father's name. He will still assert that he is honest; making light of what he terms the "follies of youth," and excusing himself by the vain plea that he is no worse than other men have been whose honesty is now unquestioned.

Let us next consider the workman with his strong and muscular frame, who, although he may be honest, yet works only half as hard when he is paid by the day as when he is paid by the piece; our next character is one who, alas, goes reeling from the public house each Saturday night, taking but half of his honest earnings to his miserable wife and his frightened half-starved children: or a third, returning home with lowering brows, and ready oaths, and angry tones. And all these will indignantly claim to be considered honest men!

And again, another character; a man tyrannical over those whom he employs, a hard master, and a stern employer, harsh and exacting, yet who lays claim to a fair name among men, and whose boast is in his honesty.

What can you say of all these? If you admit them among the faithful of your religion of honesty, you must acknowledge that they fall far below that standard of right which we first considered.

I admit that it is a great thing to be an honest man; it is a great thing to be a good citizen, ever ready to maintain social order and public tranquillity; a good father, a good husband, a good son, a good neighbor, and a good friend. All this is very necessary, and those who fail in such duties fall far short of what is absolutely required of them. But I can assure you that all this is not sufficient, that these duties are not religion, although they are commanded by religion. Something more is required of a man, and that something is Christianity.

And why? Because there is a living God, who is your Creator and your Father. Because this Almighty God has created you to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him, and thus to merit an eternal

union with Himself, an eternal happiness in the life that is to come. Because, when this world shall have passed away, there shall be another which shall never pass away; a world in which God will bestow an everlasting reward upon those who have been faithful, and will visit with everlasting punishment those who have neglected to love Him and to serve Him. Because Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, came into our midst to teach us how to live in order to attain this glorious eternity; because He pointed out to us clearly and unmistakably the path of right, the path to heaven, and declared that whosoever would not hear His words should be rejected by His Father in heaven.

And lastly, because this divine Master has sent to men the pastors of His Church, and declared to us, when sending them to be the pastors of His people, that He would continually assist them with His Holy Spirit in the teaching and administration of the one true religion, that to hear them was to hear Himself, that to disobey them was to disobey Himself, even Jesus the Son of God!

And, therefore, in order to be true children of God, to accomplish our destiny in this world, and to live in peace and truth and holiness, it is absolutely necessary to believe and to practise the Christian religion just as it is taught to the world by the Pope and the Bishops of the Catholic Church. And this is why morality, although most necessary, is very far from being all-sufficient.

FEAR OF HUMAN OPINION.

"I WOULD willingly fulfil my religious duties, but I am afraid of ridicule."—Then you are afraid to go to heaven, and not afraid to go to hell? you must have a very singular courage and a remarkable determination! O man, feeble and faithless! you are indeed faint-hearted, and should blush for your own weakness and dishonor; for what, I ask, is a greater dishonor than cowardice?

Respect for human opinion in matters of religion is the greatest cowardice of all. It is a voluntary renunciation of that which is holiest and most sacred in man—his conscience. It is a weak abandonment of our most essential rights and of our most important duties! that of leading holy Christian lives, of accomplishing our destiny here, and of saving our soul hereafter! Such cowardice is something worse than weakness, it is a folly and a sin.

You are afraid to say your prayers, to avoid evil company and places of temptation, to go to church, to seek the friendship of the

priests, and to serve God. And what could be more deserving of honor than a conscientious fulfilment of such duties as these? Prayer, the service of God, and obedience to His law are the marks which most perfectly distinguish us from creatures without reason. For the animal destitute of reason has no eternal destiny, and fulfils all the laws of its being when conscious only of the passing moments of its limited existence. But you yourself are here on earth only that you may hereafter go to heaven; and time for you is nothing but a prelude to eternity. Heaven and eternity! Behold the end and aim of life, the end which should reign supreme above all others, and without which everything is lost. Therefore by not daring to serve God during your life, you wilfully renounce both heaven and eternity; you sacrifice God, your own salvation, your own soul, and your own happiness, even as you sacrifice your duty and your conscience to a miserable fear of man, which is a thousand times unworthy of a Christian, and is despicable in a man.

"I should be ridiculed," you say! What a grievous affliction! What effect would it have upon you? You can surely afford to despise what is so utterly beneath your notice. Supposing men laughed at you because you ate when you were hungry, and drank when you were thirsty, and warmed yourself when you were cold, because you loved your mother, because you were not a scoundrel. I am speaking seriously—would you change, do you think, and try to act in some manner which would give greater satisfaction to those who thus criticised you? You will not trouble yourself to answer such a question? There is that which is more reasonable, more natural, more lawful, and more necessary still; obedience to God your Creator, the practice of religion, and the keeping of His commandments. To fear to be a Christian, is to fear to be a reasonable being, it is to fear to be a good, conscientious, and honorable man.

Go, therefore, to confession, go to the holy altar, coward that you are! and fear God rather than man!

NEGLIGENCE.

For many years the world has been devastated by a fatal and terrible sickness, which has made dreadful ravages, in all places at one and the same time: in France, England, Italy, Europe, whether the air be bad or good, the people civilized or barbarous, the whole world suffers from its fatal and deathly influence; and for centuries victims have succumbed to it. You doubtless imagine that I am

referring to some one of those scourges which we call pestilence, cholera, typhus fever, etc.: but no; the evil that I would point out to you is still more terrible, and causes the death of a still greater number of men; it not only affects the body, but it also poisons the soul, and its fatal effects endure beyond the portals of the grave.

This deplorable evil is negligence. This it is which causes the ruin of whole families and plunges them into the frightful miseries to which they sooner or later succumb. This epidemic is so much the more to be dreaded because there are no signs which give warning of its terrible approach, and it seizes a man before he suspects it is near; it draws him little by little from his duties to God, and soon after from his duties to his family and toward his fellow-men. This scourge is one of the fatal fruits of original sin.

The first symptoms show themselves, when, on being confronted by some difficulty, you stop, hesitate, and address such words to yourself as these: I cannot! It is too difficult! I have no time! I will do it on some other occasion, but not now! It is not worth the trouble of beginning, because I shall never be able to go on! It is beyond my capabilities! Oh! then, while there is yet time, ask yourself quickly these two questions, and answer them by the light of your own conscience.

1st, What should I do if I were quite assured that directly I had accomplished that which now appears to be impossible, I should receive five pounds as the price of my efforts? 2d, What should I also do if I were equally certain that I should receive a hundred stripes directly I had yielded to those insidious suggestions of negligence, which I believe at this moment that I cannot resist?

These two questions, with the answer which your conscience cannot fail to give, will prove a sure and simple remedy against the evil I have pointed out to you.

I HAVE NO TIME.

Out of ten persons who do not fulfil their religious duties, there are at least six or seven who will say to you when you speak to them about it, "I should be glad enough to do so, but I have no time; every one must gain their living. Religion is good for people with nothing else to do, who can live without working."

Nothing is more false than such reasoning as this, nothing could be more opposed to the spirit of Christianity; religion is made for all, even as God is the Father of all; and if there were any distinc

tion to be made among men, it would, unquestionably, be the poor and the insignificant who would take precedence in the sight of God.

This is a very common error among the working classes, especially in large towns; and we must say that it entirely results from ignorance. They have an absurd idea of religion—they believe that it solely consists of a very great number of outward observances; and the daily work which is absolutely necessary to workmen in order to gain a living, being evidently incompatible with such practices, they solve the difficulty by the habitual words, which they lay down as an axiom, but which are in truth an unconscious blasphemy: "I have no time." But tell me, my friend, how much time you need to love God? How much time do you need to think of Him sometimes during the course of the day; to ask Him to bless you, to crown your efforts with success, and to give you the rest of heaven after your sorrows and weariness of earth? How much time does it take to keep from swearing,—to honor your father and mother and lawful superiors,—to abstain from drinking,—to pardon your enemies, —not to return evil for evil,—to bear with the faults of others? How much time does it take to be chaste and pure, to turn from evil thoughts, to avoid sinful conversation, to shun such and such a bad companion who would be sure to lead you into wrong? Does it take much time to repent when we have done some wicked foolish thing? Still more, does it take much time to pray morning and evening? In five minutes, in ten minutes at the most, this great duty can be perfectly fulfilled; and where is the man who cannot, if he so will, spare some few minutes, at the beginning and at the end of the day?

But then, you will say, religion commands so many other things. You must hear mass on Sundays and holidays. You must go to confession, and go to communion, and does not all that take time? That is what I mean when I say I have no time. And what do those who are quite as busy as you are, and often much more busy and still more in need of gaining a salary, and who yet do all that, and more than that? I know some who never pass one week without receiving the sacraments. How do they find time to fulfil their duties? What they do, you can do. It is the will that is wanting, and not the time. The reason that you do not find time. just as they find time, is because you have not the deep conviction that they have of the vital necessity of religion. You consider the body before the soul, they consider the soul before the body. Not that they neglect their families and their own bodily requirements.

no; only they know the value and the difference of things, and rule their lives according to the truth.

What would you say if your employer attempted to deprive you of the time to eat? You would leave him, and you would say: First of all, we must live! I say to you still more emphatically: first of all, even before the life of your body, take thought for your soul, which is the noblest part of your self; your soul, which makes of you a man, since through the body we are only animals; it is the soul which makes the man, and distinguishes him from the beast.

Religion gives life to your soul by uniting it to God, and yet you tell me, I have no time to practise religion! Then, make time, this necessary time; make time, whatever it may cost you to do it, no matter where, no matter at whose expense. No one in the world has a right to deprive you of it; neither your employer, nor your masters, nor your father, nor your mother, nor yourself; no one, without any exception!

The eternal salvation of your soul may not be taken away from you by any living creature, and if any one should attempt to rob you of the most sacred of your rights, then is the time to practise the great Christian rule: To lose everything rather than to lose God.

But it is my calling, you add, which prevents me from attending to my salvation. Is that true? Answer me carefully; for if, after having well reflected, you still answered "yes," I would say to you: then you must give it up, and find some other. What will it profit you to gain the whole world and lose your own soul?

But is it really true that your calling actually prevents you from living a Christian life? Does your calling prevent you from thinking of God sometimes, from praying to Him morning and evening, from offering Him your troubles, your work, your privations? It is not your calling which forces you to take the holy name of God in vain, which drives you to public houses, and music halls, and all manner of evil resorts. The time that you spend thus would be far more than sufficient to make you a good Christian, if you would only employ it as a Christian should. For my own part, I know of no calling which need prevent the workman after his day's work is done from going to his confessor in the evening before all great festivals, and receiving the pardon of his sins, and advice and encouragement to lead a better life in the future. I know of no calling which need prevent him from going occasionally in the early morning to church, to hear low mass, and to receive communion. As a point of conscience, you must clearly see that all

have time to do what they will to do. But the will is an absolute necessity.

Therefore, say no longer, I have no time to be a Christian, for you only deceive yourself. Say, if you wish, I have not as much time, or as many opportunities, as I should wish. That may be so, but, after all, it is but the heart and the will to serve Him that God requires, and for this there is no question of time. To him who will not give to God his time, God will refuse His eternity.

BUSINESS BEFORE ALL THINGS.

An old woman, a seller of marine stores, lived in a little village on the outskirts of Paris; she was held in no small repute among her neighbors owing to her proverbial merriment, her facetious remarks, and her candor upon all subjects. Now this good woman possessed some very striking qualities: to begin with, she had never killed any one, she had never helped herself to money out of her neighbor's pockets, she loved a joke, and was, besides, particularly successful in her own little business. It is true that she never stepped foot in a church, but she made a little bow to "*Monsieur le Curé*," every time that he passed her shop; she respected religion so much that once even, in an excess of zeal, she had formally bestowed a vigorous box on the ear upon a mason who had been disputing with a certain wine-seller on the subject of theology, and who had gone so far as to proclaim that there was no God.

She was, therefore, an incomparable old woman; she believed herself to be a most spotless character, and had, she said, nothing to reproach herself for—absolutely nothing—during the whole sixty-four years of her life.

Her favorite motto was, "Business before all things!" This was a plea she invariably used if any one attempted to reason with her, and to point out that at her age it would be surely more prudent to think of eternity. "Ah, that is all very fine," she would say in a tone of hopeless obstinacy, "I am not rich enough to do nothing, and go to church. I must gain my living; and then, business before all things! That is all I know." "Business is all very well," she was answered one day by a respectable woman who had come to see her, and who was very much liked in the village because of her many good qualities. "When people are as poor as we are, they must work and gain a living. But while they are gaining a living, they must take care they do not lose heaven: that has to be gained

also, and it cannot be won just by being a worthy, honest woman; you have to be a good Christian, and fulfil your religious duties. Mark my words: your duties." "Oh, I understand what you are saying; but to fulfil religious duties one must have time, and that is just what I have not. I've no time to spare—business before all things." "Ah, but you could find time if you wished; it takes little time and no trouble to say a prayer or two morning and evening." "Oh, as to that, I'm not so bad as you make out. I never forget to make the sign of the cross when I'm going to bed. My good man used to say to me that that was all nonsense, poor dear old man, God rest his soul! But no, I have always held firm, I have always served the good God." "But that is not enough, you cannot serve God just by making the sign of the cross when you go to bed; it is not even enough to say your prayers; you must, besides, go to hear Mass every Sunday."

"But I tell you I've no time! business——" "Nonsense! you're not going to make me believe that you can't do what I can do, who keeps a shop as well as you, and can only just make two ends meet. When we try to do anything for God, He is always ready to help the poor. I never sell on Sundays when I am not obliged, and then it isn't a sin. But generally my shop is closed; I go to Mass, like all good Catholics, and I take a little turn after church; I rest from my six days' work, and you see I'm none the worse for it. We have always been good friends and neighbors, and I wish I could get you to follow my example." "But my business——" "Why, your business would get on just the same, and even supposing you did make sixpence or a shilling a week less, what would that matter, compared to the service of God? Don't you see that we are not on earth to live just like dogs? Dogs don't go to Mass, not they; they can't confess, or think of God, or heaven, or hell. Now, come, listen to me, neighbor; next Sunday we will shut up shop, and go to Mass together. Will we not?"

I cannot inform you whether the good woman was finally successful concerning her old friend, or whether by the following Sunday she had returned to her ancient refrain: Business before all things. We believe, however, that the kind neighbor gained the day. She is dead now, and the poor old woman also; if the latter could return to earth, she would say no longer, "Business before all things," but rather, "Before all, salvation."

ON THE FOLLY OF DELAY.

THE past belongs to us no more; the future does not belong to us yet, and perhaps never will, the present only is ours. Therefore, whenever we have anything of consequence to do, let us, if possible, do it at once, and never put it off until that to-morrow which perhaps may not arrive; above all should we fear to defer it until some distant future.

An incident which happened recently in a prison at Paris will help to show how wise and necessary this rule of conduct is. The prison consists of two divisions; in one part the ordinary criminals are confined, while the other is entirely allotted to more youthful offenders, who, owing to their precocity in vice, have been condemned to a certain length of imprisonment. Easter-time was drawing near. The good chaplain of this prison, therefore, assembled all these young men, and after speaking to them on the serious obligation of fulfilling their Easter duties, he requested those who desired to prepare themselves to give him their names that he might write them down. All presented themselves, with only one exception. This was a young man of seventeen.

The chaplain, troubled at his silence, which contrasted so forcibly with the willing assent of the others, went the following day to see him in his cell. "Well, my friend," he said to him kindly, "you forgot, did you not, to have your name entered for the Easter duties?" "No, sir," answered the young prisoner calmly; "I did not forget, . . . but I have not decided; I am not prepared." . . . "Oh, my child, that is nothing! I will help you to prepare yourself. It is the simplest thing in the world. Let me enter your name with the others in my list. I will make it my care to see that you perfectly fulfil your duty." "No, sir, no; not now; another time perhaps. Not this year; next year." . . . "What, next year? But, my poor young friend, next year you will have just the same difficulties. Why should you delay? You are not sure." . . . "Yes, yes; I will do my Easter duties next year; this year I cannot." The chaplain saw it would be useless to say anything more, and left him, much distressed by such unhappy stubbornness. "Poor young fellow," he said to himself, "he refuses the only comfort that is left to him in his captivity. If he only knew what he rejects!"

The next morning he went down, according to his usual custom, to the cells in the infirmary to see another young prisoner, who was

also seventeen years of age, and who had received the last sacrament five or six days before. Passing down the corridor, he noticed on the door next to the one to which he was going the number of the prisoner who had shown such unhappy dispositions only the day before. Much astonished, he opened the door, and there, in fact, he saw the young man, lying down and looking very pale. "What is the matter?" he asked; "yesterday you appeared perfectly well, my child, and to-day I find you here in the infirmary?"

There was no answer. . . .

The chaplain drew near to him.

"Ah! my God!" he exclaimed, "he is very ill." And he went out immediately to call the doctor and the Sister of Charity. Both came in haste. "Look," said the priest, "this young man has fainted. What is the matter with him?" "It cannot be anything serious," answered the sister; "it is only an hour since he came down, merely complaining of a headache." The doctor went up to the bed, and, bending over the unfortunate young man, he felt his pulse and laid his hand on his heart. "He is dead, poor boy," he said in a tone of much feeling. But the priest stood, as though rooted to the spot, unable to utter a word, his eyes fixed with a look of unutterable sorrow upon the dead upturned face and the pale parted lips. . . . And it seemed to him as though he still heard the words: "Next year. . . no religious duties this year. . . Another time—another year." . . . And Eternity had suddenly opened out before him,—an Eternity which could never bring to him "another year." . . . And this soul was already judged! The good priest turned from the lifeless body sick at heart.

In the next cell the other young prisoner was also stretched upon a bed of suffering. The sure signs of death were already written on his face. . . . "O Father," he said, in a faint, weak voice, when he saw the priest enter his cell, "O Father, I feel so happy! I am dying; I shall soon be with God! Since I received the sacraments, I have felt so happy, so peaceful!" And when the chaplain held out to him some hope of recovery—"Do not say so," he exclaimed; "do not tell me that I shall not die. I would much rather die now, you see, because I am so well prepared. . . . I feel that I love God now. . . . If I went out from here I should perhaps offend Him, and lose my own soul! Oh, no, it is far better for me to die now!" . . . And the same evening, this soul, so different from the other, appeared in its turn before Our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

The next day, the two coffins were placed side by side in the

chapel belonging to the prison, and were takn thence to the cemetery, where the same grave received them both. . . . When they shall both rise again at the last day, will their fate be the same? Alas! although the infinite mercy of God has unfathomable depths, of which we are utterly ignorant, have we not reason to fear that one of these two will be on the left of the Heavenly Judge, while the other will be placed on the right? And this only for having delayed until another time a duty which it would have been so simple to have accomplished at once!

Where is the man who can fail to profit by so terrible an example?

CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

In speaking of faith and of the Credo, we saw that the great reason for which we ought to believe all the truths of religion is that God Himself has revealed them by Jesus Christ His Son, who teaches them to us with infallible truth by the ministry of His Church.

The principle of morality is no less divine; and the reason for which we should faithfully observe the commandments of God, and of His Church, practise Christian virtues and live according to the rules of the Gospel, is that God Himself so wills, and that this supreme holy will is made known to us most clearly through Jesus Christ and His ministers.

The word morality means the moral law; in Latin, *morum lex*.

To be moral or righteous, is simply to live in accordance with that law which comes from God and which is the expression of His will; to be immoral or unrighteous, is to follow the natural inclinations in preference to the will of God, and to be ruled by the passions, and not by the divine law. Conscience is that inward light which reveals to us our duty, which reproaches us when we transgress, and applauds our obedience when we have the courage to listen to the voice of God, and to prove ourselves true Christians.

But just as there is in the world false money, which is easily mistaken for good unless it is closely examined, so is there a false morality, which is, alas! very prevalent, and which entirely results from ignorance and unbelief; a morality which does in no way suffice for the accomplishing of the will of God, and yet which many people content themselves with practising. It has been called ironically the morality of the reasonable man, but it is a very different thing from true Christian morality. Those who possess no other, falsely imagine that they have all that is needful: and this deceiving

tranquillity is often the greatest obstacle to their return to the true service of God. There is nothing more convenient nor more elastic than is this false morality. We might even add that there is nothing more immoral, or, at least, that there is nothing more powerless to render a man truly virtuous. It might be summed up in two negative commands: Thou shalt not kill.—Thou shalt not steal Two very desirable and praiseworthy requirements unquestionably, but such as do not go a great way, seeing that, beyond the precincts of a prison, nearly all mankind, both bad and good, could quite conscientiously claim this remarkable title to the esteem of their fellowmen. This mysterious moral law goes no farther, but leaves everything else wrapped in a vague uncertainty, which must be peculiarly soothing to those who are drawn by inclinations toward some action of doubtful morality. It is true that it grandiloquently commands its votaries to be good fathers, good sons, good husbands, and good citizens; but if we enter upon the question of the daily duties of life, and rules of conduct, morals, and temper, or methods of subduing vice, evil habits, selfish instincts, it has not a word to say; it forbids nothing and tolerates everything. Having this law for his only rule of life, a man might be a gambler, a drunkard, and a profligate; he might be passionate, quarrelsome, and selfish, a spendthrift, or a miser, at will; he might be utterly destitute of love of any one except himself, and devoured by idleness, pride, or sensuality.

Who does not see the hollowness of such a morality, and how impossible it is to find in such indeterminate maxims the necessary power to subdue the rebellion of the passions? It is, in fact, nothing but a deception, which enables men to do evil without burdening their consciences too heavily. Unfortunately for them, God is more exacting, and who can say that He is wrong?

That pure Christian morality, which He Himself has given us, is the law by which He will hereafter judge us; and it is no more within our power to modify it than it is in our power to change the course of the stars, or to alter the laws of nature. Very different from the morality of the rationalist is that Christian morality resting entirely upon the religion of which it is the practice. Its foundation, to which it refers everything, is the love and service of Our Lord Jesus Christ; the Gospel, with its divine maxims, is its code, and it teaches us first the necessity of penance, of self-renunciation, of brotherly love, of humility and gentleness, of purity of heart, and chastity; of detachment from the world, of obedience to God and to His Church; in one word, the practice of the Christian life and

Christian virtues. It must be acknowledged that there is some difference between this rule of conduct, and the unmeaning maxims of the good father, the good son, the good husband, and the good citizen. The most such maxims as these are capable of, as was wittily said by St. Francis of Sales, is to save us from being needy, and to gain us the esteem of those who neither look below the surface nor scrutinize too closely.

As it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of our souls that we obey the law of God and live in accordance with His will, it is most important, it is even necessary, to have a clear knowledge of Christian morality in order to be able to practise it. Let us, therefore, study it together in all its principal teachings.

CONCERNING CONSCIENCE.

CONSCIENCE is that inner voice which rules our conduct, and passes judgment upon our actions, teaching us whether they are good or evil, justifiable or clearly forbidden. The voice of conscience sounds approvingly when we do right, and visits us with sharp remorse when we do wrong. This voice, this judge, is God Himself; it is the living Truth; it is Jesus Christ dwelling within us. We can by no possibility drive this divine voice out from the sanctuary of our hearts. We may close our ears that we may not hear when we are bent on resisting it and the desire to do evil, but we can never silence the voice of God, which thus becomes, even in this world, our judgment and our condemnation. If, on the contrary, we are obedient to its teaching, if our lives are ruled by this hidden law, then shall the soul enjoy on earth a foretaste of the joys of Heaven, and shall see in God only a Saviour, a Father, and a Friend, who communicates to it, even in this world, that peace and happiness which it is destined to possess, in perfect plentitude, hereafter.

Conscience is an unerring tribunal, and we must either be guided by its judgments or fall into sin. But it often happens that human weakness and the wiles of the devil prevent us from clearly discerning the voice of conscience. We are, then, in the same embarrassment as the servant who hears but indistinctly the orders of his master, or, rather, under the same delusion as a man partially deaf who believes that he hears something different from what has been really said. How should one act who finds himself in this false position?

In the first place, and this is a general rule, it is never allowable

to go against the conscience—that is to say, no one may ever perform an action which they believe to be guilty, or abstain from an action which they believe to be commanded. Therefore the one thing needful is to cultivate a clear, true, loyal, and upright conscience, and to do this, it is generally sufficient to seek the truth earnestly, and to resist all deceptions.

If, nevertheless, in spite of good intentions we cannot succeed in forming a conscientious judgment, we must seek and follow with simplicity the advice of some enlightened person, of a good priest, if that be possible, and be guided by his decision. There is no rule of conduct more practical than this, for many good people, whose conscience is tender and scrupulous, will often feel embarrassed and doubtful as to how they ought to act. If, by any misfortune, we have neither time nor means of seeking advice, let us form as conscientious a decision as we can, and strive earnestly to do that which we think to be right, in all cases when we cannot feel certain. When involved in absolute doubt, let us ever choose the safest side, and follow it to an extreme rather than risk the chance of offending God.

We do not hesitate to say that a clear conscience is the true secret of happiness. Happiness is deeply rooted in the heart of man: it is not shut up within the purse, nor is it to be attained by means of bodily indulgence. Those who enjoy an inward peace, who love God, and seek to please and serve Him, may be happy even in sickness and suffering, and amidst all the privations of poverty. Death itself wears a different aspect, and every day good Christians prove, by their calmness, their serenity, and their happiness at that supreme moment, the truth of what we have just said.

"This is a happy day for me," said a poor soldier, condemned to death, to the priest who was assisting him and leading him to the place of execution, "a very happy day, father! I shall soon be with God, I am going home. My heart is so full of gladness, it seems as if I must be going to some joyful festival. I have sinned very heavily, but I hope that God will show me much mercy." This poor condemned soldier had fully made his peace with God during the two months which passed between the sentence and its execution. Moved to the deepest repentance, he had approached the sacraments of penance and the Holy Eucharist every week, and his conscience, transfigured by religion, was now in the enjoyment of a perfect peace, and a marvellous calm.

Do not wait until the last moment to purify your conscience. If

it reproach you with some serious fault, do not harden your heart and deceive your own self; but rather repent of the evil of which it accuses you, and at once, like the prodigal son, arise, and return unto your Father. Summon all your courage; do not wait until it is too late. Go and make a good and sincere confession of your sins to some good priest; from him you will obtain mercy, encouragement, and consolation, and he will restore to you the inestimable treasure of a quiet conscience, by pardoning your sins in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE GRACE OF GOD.

We must not think that we only need a clear knowledge of our duty, and shall then necessarily accomplish it. To think that would be to lose sight of human weakness, and the strife of human passions. We need strength to do the right, and to obey God; and so much the more strength, since, by reason of original sin, tumult and disorder lay waste the heart of man, which ever inclines to evil rather than to good.

This necessary strength to live as a good Christian, to avoid sin, and to practise Christian virtues, is given to us by God through Jesus Christ our Saviour, and it is this strength which we call grace. Without it, we could neither do right nor avoid wrong, but with its help we are capable of doing all things and suffering all things in order to accomplish the will of God. Grace is to the soul what light is to the eyes; without the light we cannot see, but with the light we are enabled to perceive even dim and distant objects.

Grace is the internal and spiritual union of the soul with Our Lord Jesus Christ; it is the indwelling of Jesus Christ in the soul, and the indwelling of the soul in Him. From the inmost recesses of our soul, as from the inmost recesses of His temple and His sanctuary, the Son of God gives to us the continual assistance of His Holy Spirit to enable us to repulse the attacks of the devil, our enemy and His, and to help us to observe all the commandments of God. He never abandons us to our own weakness; He never refuses us His grace; and when we sin, we alone are guilty of turning wilfully and deliberately away from God.

This union of the soul with Jesus Christ constitutes the true life of the soul. The life of the body springs from its union with the soul; and the life of the soul springs from its union with Jesus Christ, its Saviour and its God. And this life of the soul need never end, since

in heaven, we are destined to enjoy an eternal union with God, if we will but make the noblest use of our free-will while here on earth, and constantly endeavor to preserve the grace of God. And next, let us ask, in what manner is this grace bestowed upon us? and how is the mystical union of the soul with Jesus Christ accomplished? By prayer, and the holy sacraments.

We may compare the grace that is given us by God to the pure waters of a fountain, which flow for our benefit, through many different outlets. One of these channels, less important perhaps than the rest, but always open, would fitly represent prayer, to which we may have recourse under all circumstances; seven other jets of water, far more powerful, but less frequently resorted to, would well represent the seven sacraments.

Let us, then, constantly thirst for this divine water of grace, and thus, like true children of God, drink of the waters which Jesus will give, and which spring up into life everlasting.

THE BEST STATE.

WHICH is the best of all states? Out of a hundred or a thousand, which is the best of all! Certainly it is not mine; the work is too hard, and the profits too small. It must be that of a man with an income of his own, and nothing to do from morning till night but amuse himself. To weary himself, you might add, from the mere fact of having so little to do. No, that is not the best state certainly. It is not the rank of a king or an emperor; sovereigns are overwhelmed with hard and wearisome duties; it was a king who said sadly to one of his ministers when he was complaining of the intolerable burden of his responsibilities, "I am far more to be pitied than yourself, my friend; we are both of us condemned to hard labor; but yours is only for a time, while mine is labor for life." To govern men is decidedly no easy task, and the best state of life is not the office of a king. Perhaps you will tell me it is the condition of a poor man? No, not that: I will solve the enigma. The best state is the state of grace. The state of grace! and what is that? There is no patent for any such profession? No, but this is something far better; the patent for all other callings is granted by the government, the patent of the state of grace is given by God, by the King of heaven and earth! He gives it gratuitously to all who desire it, and He never withdraws it until it is wished for no more. With this patent, and in this admirable condition, men make a rapid

fortune; they accumulate treasures which far surpass in value all the treasures of bankers, and millionaires, and the princes of this world; treasures which no one can take from us, and which are safely laid up where neither rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. If that is the case, you say, I will certainly renounce my present calling, which is wearisome and far from lucrative, and make choice of this excellent state which appears so wonderfully desirable. That is well, nothing could be simpler; you need not even give up your present calling in order to serve a new apprenticeship. The state of grace which is given by God to those who love Him is compatible with all others, with one single exception: the state of sin. And now you already understand to what I desired to lead you, and what the state of grace really is. It is, in truth, the best of all states. It is that of a pure conscience, at peace with God and itself; the happy state of a soul which is not stained by any mortal sin, and is firmly purposed to remain a Christion soul, by the fulfilment of its duties to God and man. The priest brings and preserves to the world this precious gift of the state of grace. He bestows it for the first time in baptism, in which the child is cleansed from original sin, admitted among Christians, and made a child of God.

And, again, whenever during the course of our lives, we are so unhappy as to fall from this holy state by reason of sin, the priest has the power to restore it to us by the pardon which he gives in the name of Jesus Christ, in the sacrament of penance.

Lastly, he presents to us, every day if we will, in the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, the mysterious food which gives to our weakness strength to resist temptation and to persevere in the state of grace. This is the state peculiar to all true Christians. A Christian without grace resembles a withered branch, which is no longer able to bear flowers or fruit. His works, however praiseworthy, are utterly useless as far as heaven is concerned; they are dead in the eyes of God, and consequently pass unrewarded.

Sin, which separates the soul from God, is the death of the soul; grace, which, on the contrary, unites it to God, is the life of the soul. A Christian who does not make it his chief care, before all other things, to be in a state of grace, both by avoiding sin, and by repenting with his whole heart if he has been so unhappy as to fall into it, is not worthy of the holy name he bears, and does not comprehend the first word of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Let us therefore question our own hearts, and search our own consciences. Are we in a state of grace? Since our last confession and our last communion, have we served God well? Have we prayed well? Have we kept the Sundays holy? Have we observed the commandments of God, and of His Church? Have we not fallen back weakly into certain serious sins, which we had promised ourselves for the future to avoid?

If you only perceive a little dust, only a little human weakness, on the white robe of your conscience, thank God with all your heart, and renew your good resolutions to be ever pure and faithful. If, on the contrary, the holy robe of innocence is torn and defiled, like the prodigal son in the Gospel: call all your courage to your aid, rise, and, full of confidence and true repentance, return unto your Father: go, and confess your sins; go, and regain the white robe, the holy robe of Christians, and then, with the help of God, strive never again to abandon that best and noblest state of life—the state of grace.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND CHRISTIAN VIRTUES.

It is not enough to do the right; it is also necessary to do the right in the right way. In order to be a good Christian, to please God, and to go to heaven, an outward observance of the Ten Commandments of God, and the six commandments of the Church, is far from sufficient; it is also necessary to observe them with certain interior dispositions which we call the Christian spirit, or Christian virtue. No one is a Christian except upon this condition. The outward observance of the commandments is like the body of the Christian life: the Christian spirit is the soul of this body. A body without a soul is only a corpse and not a man. What, then, is this Christian spirit without which no one can be truly a child of God? It consists of certain dispositions or qualities which are called Christian virtues, and the possession of which renders men more and more like to Jesus Christ. Among these virtues the principal and most necessary are:

Humility, which consists in acknowledging willingly and thankfully that, since all the good we have comes from God, we cannot glory in anything, but should remember constantly that, if others seem to see in us any good or noble qualities, it is to God alone that praise and honor are due. For this reason, a man who is truly humble never esteems himself above others, but ever distinguishes

between his own weakness and nothingness and the gifts that God has given him.

Humility is the rarest and most difficult, as well as the most fundamental of all Christian virtues. "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Meekness is that holy disposition which enables us to live, as in the sight of Our Lord, in perfect peace, and to be full of sweetness and forbearance both to others and to ourselves, avoiding all manner of anger or strife. Meekness is the balm of life. If humility is the perfection of love to God, meekness is the perfection of love to man.

Patience is that Christian virtue which enables us to bear without murmuring, and even with joy, in union with our crucified Saviour, all the sufferings, injuries, persecutions, and trials of this present life. It is by patience that we may become in all things conquerors over ourselves; it is by patience that we may merit a participation in that glory which God prepares for His children as their everlasting reward.

The virtue of poverty, or detachment from all earthly goods, is that rare and holy disposition by which the heart becomes impervious to the love of riches, and all perishable things, and is ever lifted from earth to heaven, where the only real and lasting good is to be found. This spirit is as necessary and as possible to the rich as to the poor. A Christian may possess the merit of poverty in the midst of riches, if his heart is not attached to them; while he may be utterly destitute of it in the midst of all the privations of real poverty, if he have an excessive desire for the riches and comforts which God Himself withholds.

Chastity, or purity, is that Christian virtue by which all the disordered desires of the flesh become subject to reason and to the will of God, and which thus preserves the whole man in a state of holy innocence, and enables the soul to give itself to the service of God. Chastity of heart is the essential principle of chastity of body; the one guard is within, the other without. It is the most delicate and the most fragile of all virtues. It is above nature, but not contrary to nature. It is to be observed in all states, although according to different degrees.

Obedience is that Christian virtue which subjects our will to the holy will of God, who is our only Lord and Master; and, for the sake of God, to the will of all our legitimate superiors, our ecclesiastical superiors, our civil superiors, and our domestic superiors. By obeying his superiors it is God Himself whom the Christian obeys.

since all true authority comes from God, who is alone the Lord of all things. It is the want of obedience which has produced all heresy and schism, and which has often given birth to revolutions.

All these virtues may be summed up in one alone, and that is Christian penance, viz., self-renunciation, constancy in mortifying and repressing without ceasing all the corrupt inclinations of nature, to follow in the steps of Jesus Christ our divine Model, and to live in accordance with the holy rules of the faith. If you do not do penance, said the Saviour, you shall all likewise perish. Lastly, the virtue which should crown, predominate, and give birth to all other Christian virtues is divine charity, or the love of God, and of Jesus Christ. To love Him, to serve Him from love, to suffer everything for His love, to love our brethren, our enemies, for love of Him: this is the perfection, this is the soul of the Christian's life. He is our God, and through Him alone can we reach heaven.

Blessed are they who seek to practise the virtues we have briefly pointed out. We will next consider the vices which have power to destroy these virtues. From life we will pass on to speak of death.

SIN AND VICES.

THE Christian life is the participation in the holiness of our Lord, our divine Head, and great Example; sin and vice are the participation in the rebellion of the devil, the enemy of God and men. Sin is not the same thing as vice. Sin is to vice what the fruit is to the tree; what the effect is to the cause. Sin is a transitory act, vice is an evil disposition, a permanent state of the heart. They have one thing in common, they are both opposed to the divine law. Sin must be either mortal or venial. Mortal sin is so decidedly guilty that it separates us from Jesus Christ, causes death to the soul, and draws down upon our heads the terrible judgments of God. Venial sin is a less grievous fault, of which the effect is to draw us away from God, without entirely separating us from His love. Mortal sin may be compared to death, and venial sin to sickness.

It is often difficult in practice, to be assured whether a sin is mortal or venial. For this reason both should be most carefully avoided. We may give, however, a few general rules by which a mortal sin may be distinguished:

1. By a will set to do evil.
2. By a sufficient knowledge of the evil that is committed.
3. By a matter of certain importance, nevertheless, as the will is

The principal agent in all questions of right and wrong, a grievous sin may unquestionably be committed by the will and the desire to commit it.

The vices which bring forth sin consist of certain evil dispositions, directly opposed to those Christian virtues of which we have been speaking. There are seven principal vices, which are, however, all of the same order or class.

Pride, the most fundamental of all vices, and the most at enmity with God, whose glory it does, in a manner, appropriate. Pride is that evil tendency to attribute to ourselves all the good that God has bestowed upon us, and to feel a certain amount of complacency in our own excellence, in our merits, in our good works, in our virtues; it leads us to desire and to seek the praise of men, and renders us vain, susceptible, arrogant, ambitious, and selfish. Pride is the special sin of Satan, and the most dangerous of all vices.

Covetousness is an overweening desire for worldly goods, and especially for money, which is the representative of earthly posessions. Just as the virtue of poverty may be practised in the midst of riches, so is it possible to be very avaricious even although penniless, since avarice springs from the heart and not the purse. Covetousness must not be confounded with economy; but people sometimes deceive themselves, and imagine they are economical, while they are in reality avaricious.

Lust, or impurity, is an inordinate love of carnal pleasures. This terrible vice, which brings with it both its shame and its punishment, is the most formidable enemy of society, and especially of youth.

Anger, which is the consequence of pride, is the vice which leads us to resent every species of contradiction, and which drives the peace of God from our souls.

Gluttony is the inordinate love of eating and drinking. The glutton does not eat to live, but lives to eat; he does not drink to allay his thirst, but drinks for the love of drinking. Drunkenness is the worst form of gluttony, and the most disastrous in its effects.

Envy is that utterly selfish and unchristian disposition which causes us to regard with regret the success and well-being of our neighbor. And lastly, sloth is that spiritual heaviness and torpor which renders us negligent and indolent in well-doing, which destroys in our hearts all fortitude and generosity, and causes us to turn with loathing from all laborious duties or wholesome self-exertion, whether in the service of God, or in the duties of our state of life.

These vices, which are also called the deadly sins, are the seven

great roads which lead infallibly to hell all who are mad enough to enter upon this downward journey. If we are already treading either of these paths, let us make haste to retrace our steps; this may be done by means of a contrary virtue. If we are proud, let us become humble; if we are passionate, let us become meek and patient; if we are covetous, let us become poor in spirit and detached from the things of earth; if our lives are sinful and defiled, let us become pure and holy; if we are gluttonous and intemperate, let us become abstemious and sober; if we are envious, let us become charitable; if we are slothful and indolent, let us take courage, break the bonds of evil habits, and strive manfully to do the right.

To know, to detest, and to avoid all that is evil, to know, to love, and to practise all that is good, such is the summary of Christian morality, for the perfect fulfilment of which, let us remember, we must be actuated by one only aim—the desire to please God, and to obey the most holy laws of our sovereign Lord and Master.

THE DECALOGUE.

HAVING now clearly defined the nature of Christian morality, we will go on to speak of that grand summary of the divine law which is called the Decalogue.

Decalogue means, in Greek, the ten words. It was God Himself who spoke these words to the human race, thus summing up the principal commandments which it is necessary to observe in order to attain eternal life. These commandments are commonly called the ten commandments of God. Known, from the commencement of the world, to the ancient patriarchs, they were solemnly promulgated on Mount Sinai, from the midst of thunder and lightning, and transmitted to Moses for the chosen people of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ sanctioned them anew, and raised them to perfection by affixing to them the divine precepts of the Gospel, and by embodying the whole in the two commands of love to God and love to men. The three first of these ten commandments relate immediately to our duties to God; the other seven more directly concern our duties toward our neighbor and ourselves; nevertheless, all equally relate to God, for whose love, and by whose command, we must obey them.

Love of our neighbor would not be, in fact, a religious sentiment, if it had no connection with God, in whom alone all religion concentrates.

By the first commandment of God we are bound to adore Him as

our sovereign Lord and Master, the principal and the end of all things, as our Creator, and as the Holy of holies; to believe in Him, and in all His words, because He is the sovereign truth; to hope in Him, because He is infinite goodness and infinite mercy; to love Him above all things, and to devote ourselves to His service, because He is the supreme good, perfection that knows no limit, and love that knows no end. We sin against this commandment by unbelief, by religious indifference, by the omission of prayer, and by negligence in the worship of God, by despair, and lastly by impiety.

The second commandment forbids us, not only to blaspheme the sacred and adorable name of God, but also to utter it without reverence, and in this command we must include the holy names of Jesus and of Mary.

By the third commandment we are bound to keep holy the seventh day of the week, called Sunday, and, for this purpose, to rest from material (or servile) work, and join with others in assisting together at the holy sacrifice of the Mass and to give ourselves up more especially to prayer and Christian works. The non-observance of these three commandments is one of the scourges which has been chiefly instrumental in drawing down upon our century the strokes of divine justice.

By the fourth commandment, the first of those which regulate our immediate duties to our neighbor and ourselves, we are bound to honor, love, and assist our father and mother, and to obey them, and all our lawful superiors, in everything that is not contrary to the law of God; to treat our equals and our inferiors with the same consideration that we ourselves desire, and to have respect to all men, remembering that they are, like ourselves, children of God and brethren of Jesus Christ.

The fifth commandment forbids homicide, hatred, slander and vengeance, duels and conflicts, and all that can injure our neighbor in his life, in his body, and in his reputation. Anger is principally condemned by these words of the Decalogue.

By the sixth commandment we are bound to be ever chaste and pure in the sight of God and men. Our body does not belong to us; it belongs to God, who alone created it. This commandment is broken by evil thoughts wilfully consented to, by reading pernicious books, by licentious conversation, and, generally speaking, by all that is hurtful to holy purity.

The seventh commandment defends against all unjust attacks the possessions of another. It condemns theft, and every injustice which

could in any way tend to deprive our neighbor of that which lawfully belongs to him.

The eighth commandment forbids all false testimony and lies. We owe the truth to our neighbor just as we owe it to ourselves. Lies that could injure our neighbors are the most serious of all. This sin is called calumny.

The ninth commandment forbids all sinful desires in everything that relates to purity; and in this prohibition it goes still further than the sixth.

Finally, the tenth and last commandment requires from us such a perfect respect for justice, that even a single unjust desire for the possessions of another should be banished from our heart.

Such are the ten great commandments which sum up the whole of morality, and of which the law of the Gospel is but the perfect development. "Keep the commandments, and you shall live," said our divine Master to us all. "*Hoc fac, et vives.*"

THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

IN a previous explanation of the Credo we defined the Church as the great society of Christians, governed and sanctified by Jesus Christ, its divine Pastor, and by the Pope and the Catholic Bishops, the visible representatives of this divine head. The commandments of the Church are those religious laws by which the Church is governed. The lawful pastors of the Church have alone the right to command us thus in the name of God, since they are the sole inheritors of the ministry of St. Peter and the Apostles, and of the promises of Jesus Christ.

The Pope and the Bishops are men, it is true, but they are men invested with the divine and priestly power of Jesus Christ, and therefore it is nothing but want of a right apprehension to say, as is sometimes said by those who consider themselves wonderfully advanced and enlightened: "I am quite willing to obey God, but certainly not men like myself."

We are all obliged, under pain of disobedience, which is more or less serious according to circumstances, to obey unquestioningly all the laws laid down for us by the Pope and the Bishops of our diocese. There are, however, six principal laws, which we are accustomed to regard more particularly as the commandments of the Church. These six regulate the sanctification of Sundays and holy days of obligation, public penance, and the frequentation of the

sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. The two first command all Christians, who are not positively prevented, to keep holy all Sundays and holy-days of obligation, viz., the Circumcision, the Immaculate Conception, the Ascension, the Assumption, All Saints, and Christmas Day. These feasts must be observed exactly like Sunday when they fall during the week. The principal obligation imposed upon the faithful for the sanctification of Sundays and festivals is to assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

The commandment by which the Church regulates the public penance of Christians relates to the days of fasting and abstinence. The days of abstinence are all Fridays and the Sundays in Lent; the fasting days are the forty days of Lent; certain Vigils; the Ember days; and in England the Wednesdays and Fridays in Advent. To abstain is to go without meat. To fast is to eat but one full meal in the day. What is commonly called a collation is not intended as an additional repast, but only as a refection to ward off sickness and prevent weakness. Those who are really incapable are dispensed from fasting, but to act with a safe conscience every one should first consult their confessor; all, after the age of reason, are obliged to abstain on Fridays, and, after the age of twenty-one, to fast and abstain throughout Lent, upon the Ember Days, and on certain Vigils, or days preceding festivals. As these regulations are, however, different in different countries, it is necessary to follow in everything the commands of the Bishops of the diocese, which are always announced by the parish priest.

The two commandments of the Church relative to the sacraments oblige the faithful, under pain of mortal sin and excommunication, to confess at least once a year, as soon as they shall have reached the age of reason, and when the priest shall find them capable of being instructed to communicate at Easter; it is this that is commonly spoken of as the Easter duties.

It is better, far better, to approach much more frequently to the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist; but it is not a universal obligation except at the festival of Easter. If from negligence, or from some less culpable motive, any one should have been unable to fulfil this duty at the time fixed by the Church, the omission must be atoned for as quickly as possible, even though it should be already the end of the year. It need not be said that a bad confession and a sacrilegious communion do not satisfy this law of the Church.

How entirely the whole aspect of the world would change, if all rendered a faithful and willing obedience to the holy laws of the

Church! It is almost impossible to obey them without quickly becoming a true Christian.

MOSES AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD.

In our childhood we all learned the wonderful history of Moses. This great servant of God was chosen to be the deliverer of the Hebrew race unjustly oppressed by the wicked in Egypt. Endowed with divine power from on high, he worked such terrible and startling miracles before the Pharaoh, or King of Egypt, that he obliged this cruel prince to allow the four hundred thousand children of Israel whom he held in bondage to return to their own country. These miracles are known by the name of the ten plagues of Egypt.

They were worked in the sight of all the people, during a succession of months, and are so certain, so authentic, the incredulous have never been able, in spite of many efforts, to explain them away in any reasonable or justifiable manner.

In their passage from Egypt to Judea, the Israelites, conducted by Moses, came to the borders of the Red Sea, and we all know how the leader of God's people, in the name of the Creator, commanded the waters of the Red Sea to divide in order to allow the innumerable flock, which God had intrusted to his guidance, to pass through upon dry land.

On the third day of the third month after their departure from Egypt, they reached the foot of a mountain become forever celebrated under the name of Mount Sinai. This was the place God had chosen in which to give to His people, and through His people to the whole world, that incomparable moral code which we call the Decalogue.

Moses, the friend of God, received the command to prepare all the people for this grand solemnity by a fast of three days. Barriers were placed at the foot of Mount Sinai, and the penalty of death was pronounced by the Lord Himself against him who should dare to pass this boundary without being called. At the commencement of the third day the holy mountain was suddenly enveloped in mysterious clouds, lightning surrounded it on all sides, and the whole people, in awe and trembling, heard the voice of the Lord their God calling unto Himself His servant Moses. In obedience to the divine voice, Moses passed the barrier, and ascended with humility and trust to the summit of Mount Sinai. There God deigned to speak to him as friend to friend. Moses passed forty days upon the mountain

neither eating nor drinking; having strengthened himself previously with that divine food by which the blessed Saints and Angels live eternally in heaven.

It was before this long communion with the Lord that there were given to the people of God those ten commandments, which comprehend the whole moral code of the ancient and also of the new alliance. God promulgated them Himself in the presence of all the people, who heard distinctly the voice of the Lord, the eternal Word, the divine Truth, who should one day become incarnate, and should thus dwell, one God among us, under the adorable name of Jesus.

I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

1. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not adore them nor serve them.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

Such is the divine text of the commandments of God. The first three, as we have before said, relate more particularly to our duties toward God, and the other seven more especially to our duties toward our neighbor.

We will next give a simple explanation of each of these great commandments; and, in the mean time, let us earnestly endeavor to put them into practice, since it is for this purpose that we are here on earth. One thing only is needful, and that is to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him; other duties may be good and desirable, but they can never be but of a secondary importance.

Who then is truly wise? and whose the life that most fully answers the great object of existence? The Christian; and the Christian's life: the life of the man who strives to accomplish the will of God, and to whom time is nothing worth, but as a means to gain eternity; while those who pass their days in pleasure and in all

manner of occupations, shutting God as it were, out of their lives, must surely be possessed by some species of madness since they are content to lavish all their powers and capabilities upon the merest trifles, and to neglect the one sole object of creation—the noble end and holy aim for which they were born into the world.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

One day a doctor of the Jewish law questioned Our Lord, asking Him which was the greatest of the commandments. Jesus answered him and said: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy strength, and with all thy soul. This is the first and greatest commandment.

After an instant's reflection, this answer will appear very simple, and the ignorance or rather forgetfulness of this fundamental truth is a striking proof of the thoughtlessness of the age in which we live. Men think of everything before they think of God, they love everything before Him, or, rather, instead of loving Him. From this indifference, which, although it is less detestable than utter impiety, is perhaps still more disastrous, springs the religion of those who fulfil their duties toward men, and seem to imagine that they have none to fulfil toward God. The chief defect in their religion is, that it happens to be no religion at all. Religion supposes before everything the worship of God, and in this pretended religion men live as though there were no God; they do not think of Him, they do not render Him any worship, they do not pray to Him, and, more than all, they do not love Him. It is very right and very necessary to fulfil all the duties of social life, the natural duties of father, husband, son, and citizen, but that is not sufficient, and it is absolutely necessary that each one who desires to accomplish his destiny in this world should live to God, and render to Him each day a tribute of adoration, prayer, devotion, obedience, and, more than all, of love. The service of God should be the one great interest in the life of every rational being; the love of God should be the first and principal emotion of the heart predominating over every other. If you ignore this rule you are no Christian, you are among the number of those who live for this world only, while your destiny is to live eternally and to use the world only as a means of reaching heaven.

Alas! how many pagans there are in the midst of us, how many Christians who are Christians only by baptism and by name!

The first commandment of God is, perhaps, the most disregarded,

and the least understood in our century; and yet it is the most important of all. It commands us to adore, to love, and to serve Him who gives us existence, who gives us the mind with which we think, the heart with which we love, the will with which we direct our life. God gives us all that we are, all that we have, our soul as well as our body; and, as He destines us for the possession of Himself in heaven, it is surely not hard to understand that He desires us to render Him in this world all the homage that is His due. This homage, this worship, is what we call religion. There is but one true religion, because there is but one God, and this true religion is the Christian or Catholic religion. It is therefore by being a good Christian, a good and faithful Catholic, that we may render to our Heavenly Father all that we owe Him, and, by so doing, perfectly fulfil the designs and intention of God.

To adore God is to acknowledge Him as the infinite, supreme, eternal Being who made all things, and upon whom all things depend; it is to annihilate ourselves before His sovereign greatness, and to acknowledge, with deep humility, that all we have comes from Him, and that without Him we should not ever exist. We must adore God alone, because He alone is the Creator and the sovereign Lord of all things. Jesus Christ, God incarnate, must be adored because He is God as well as man. We may not adore the Blessed Virgin, nor the Saints and Angels, still less their images. The Blessed Virgin, in fact, although the Mother of Jesus Christ, and consequently the Mother of God, is, nevertheless, only a simple creature of the great Creator whom alone we must adore. The Angels and Saints are only His servants, and it is entirely on account of the fidelity with which they have served Him that we honor, love, and reverence them.

To adore any creature, no matter whom, in the place of God, or even at the same time as God, would be to commit a horrible and abominable sin which is called idolatry. The Catholic Church has already destroyed idolatry throughout Europe, and in many parts of the other continents: her missionaries brave martyrdom and death only to destroy idolatry throughout the earth, and to restore to Jesus Christ, who is the true and living God, the homage unjustly paid to false divinities.

To serve God is to do His holy will in every action of life: it is to be to Jesus Christ just what a good and faithful servant is to his master. He cares for his master's interests, carries out his orders to the best of his power, defends him when he is attacked, never suffers

any one to speak ill of him, seeks to please him in all things, and to avoid everything which could offend him. Behold what it is to serve God; even so is He served by good and faithful Christians, by men who are devoted to Jesus, and who clearly discern the end for which they are on earth.

The service of God is the great object of life, the one paramount duty and interest of man.

To love God is to feel that He is in truth our heavenly Father, and to render Him a heart which ever beats with that divine emotion which He Himself has given us, and which we call love. Cold and ungrateful beyond words must be the nature which feels no love for Jesus, who is infinite perfection, infinite goodness, all tenderness and mercy, and ineffable sweetness. To love God is to commence on earth what we shall continue eternally in heaven. It is impossible that we should even possess true peace, true joy, or true happiness without this love by which the whole life is purified and ennobled.

If we love God let us prove our love in every word and action. "If you love Me," He says to us in the Gospel, "keep My commandments." If we love God, let us often think of Him with joy and with tenderness; let us often say to Him: "My God, I love Thee above all things." Let us mingle this feeling of love for God without most ordinary actions, and do everything with the habitual desire to please Him, and to accomplish His holy will.

To adore God, to love Him, and to serve Him: such is the spirit of the first commandment.

PRAYER.

We cannot be Christians, or please God, without His grace; that is to say, without being united to Jesus Christ His Son; and this grace, this life-giving union, we can only obtain by prayer and the holy sacraments.

What, then, is prayer? How many people are mistaken upon this point, and, counting as prayer that which is very far from being prayer, imagine that to serve God and to pray to Him it is necessary to have nothing else to do, to go to church all day long, and a thousand other things quite out of question for any man who is obliged to gain his living by untiring work day after day!

To pray is to think of God by loving Him, adoring Him, thanking Him for all His benefits, and asking from Him with confidence all the graces which we need.

Prayer is an act of the heart and of the mind, which is possible under all circumstances, in the midst of work. and of all the different occupations in which we may be employed. What can prevent us while we are going and coming in the streets and in the fields, while we are engaged in the labors of our calling, in the morning when going to our work, in the evening when returning from it; during the night when we awake, from lifting our heart and thoughts to Jesus Christ ever present in the depths of the soul, and from saying to Him: My God, I love Thee and adore Thee. I unite my work and all my cares to Thy sufferings. Pardon my sins; have pity on my weakness. Bless my work, and teach me to love Thee; or any such simple and heartfelt prayers as these? And I can assure you, moreover, that these are the best of all prayers, that they are those to which God listens with most pleasure, because they are more natural, and because they express the truest, deepest feelings of Religion.

Those formulas of prayer which are called vocal prayers, and which are to be found in works of devotion, are very useful means of rousing our hearts to prayer; but, we must not forget that these are not true prayers, unless we lift the heart as well as move the lips, when we are engaged in reciting them. It is well to use them, but we must only use them as a means of praying better. What is the good of praying? people sometimes say. Does not God know my wants without my telling Him? Yes, God does know all we need. But not only does He desire that we should tell Him all our wants and cares, as children to their father, and as servants to their master, but more than this, we know well that prayer does not merely consist of asking from God just what we need for soul and body. For this is only the least sublime part of that great act which we call prayer. More than all else, to pray is to adore God, it is to offer the profound homage of creatures who only exist by His Almighty power, of servants who are only placed on earth to render Him their service and to accomplish His holy will, of children whom He loves as a most tender father and who return Him love for love.

Love and adoration—these are the two principal acts of prayer, and the very foundation of the Christian life.

Not only must we adore God and love Him, but we must also pray to thank Him for all the benefits with which He overwhelms us, and especially for the love with which He deigns to regard us, and for the happiness which He prepares for us, if we are faithful to Him. This act of thanksgiving is again superior to an act of suppli-

cation. Lastly, among all supplications, properly so-called, there is one with which none of us can dispense, and that is the supplication we offer up to God to obtain the pardon of our sins, through the merits of Jesus Christ, our most merciful Saviour.

It is therefore necessary to pray, to think often of God, and often to express the love and reverence with which our hearts are filled. But it is especially needful to pray in the morning and in the evening; at the commencement of the day which God has given us, to consecrate it all to Him, and at the end of the day, to thank Jesus for the graces He has given us during the course of it, and to ask His forgiveness of the sins we have perhaps committed.

And let us never forget to pray when we are tempted to do wrong; prayer at such a time resembles the shield with which the warrior arms himself in order to resist the attacks of the enemy. Lastly, let us always pray with attention and reverence, with confidence, humility, and perseverance. He who prays not thus prays badly, and is not heard by God. When we are reciting prayers, the rosary for instance, let us be very careful to pray with the spirit of recollection, with the heart and mind ever lifted up to God, and not merely with the movement of the lips. May our divine Lord and Saviour grant you the grace of prayer, cause you to love it, and to find the practice of it sweet and easy! You will derive from it the sanctification of your life, purity of heart, the secret of true joy, and the only consolation in sorrow; and, with the help of prayer, you will become a true servant of God.

FAITH AND PATIENCE IN PRAYER.

We must pray; it is the command of God; it is the clearly expressed will of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The man who prays saves his soul; he who does not pray lives without God, is no Christian, and will assuredly be lost.

But it is not enough to pray; we must pray with faith and perseverance. Sometimes men will begin to pray; but being fully persuaded that divine things are governed by the same law as human things, they immediately desire to find the answer to their prayer close within their reach. Seeing no result, they imagine that their prayer is useless, and thus fall into a state of discouragement. They do not know that prayer is an act of faith, and requires before all things that men should believe in its power, even when they perceive no immediate effects. How many earnest prayers, fully heard by

God, have produced no fruits for a very long time, and sometimes not until after centuries! At the last judgment, this mystery will be revealed to us, and we shall then see the marvellous effects that have been worked by Christian prayer.

Think of the prayer of St. Stephen, when he was being stoned. This prayer wrought the conversion of St. Paul, who was yet a Jew, and who took charge of the garments of his persecutors. Now imagine all the good that was done by St. Paul, who converted whole nations by preaching the Christian religion throughout the world, and by instructing the faithful. And yet, may not all the good of which St. Paul was the author, and which is still developing century after century, be clearly traced back to St. Stephen, who by his prayer changed the persecutor into an Apostle? Thus, your prayers may perhaps be asked for the conversion of some young man who is living a very wild and reckless life. For this end, you pray with all your heart, recite several chaplets, visit some sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin, and make one or two good communions; after a certain length of time, very often without your knowledge, and even after your death, this young man returns to God, gives himself up to good works, cares for the poor, goes still further and becomes a priest or a missionary, converts a great number of souls, and during the course of a long life does an immense amount of good. And is not all this the fruit of your prayer, that prayer of which you were never able to see any effects, and which you were perhaps tempted to regard as useless? It is to you, and to your prayers, that this young man owes his conversion, and you will share his reward. How great the loss, if you had not prayed, or if you had prayed badly! Mothers of families, you have asked of God, in all your daily prayers, the gift of perseverance for your sons and daughters in the path of holiness. Now, looking down the stream of time, behold them grown up and married, and becoming in their turn the fathers and mothers of families, then bringing up their children in the right and Christian way; children who shall, later on, become themselves the centres of Christian homes, and thus ever on in endless succession. Mark the power of your prayer which reaches unto numerous generations. Sometimes God appears to refuse what we ask of Him. Patience! the day will surely come in which we shall reap the hidden fruits of every holy effort, fruits of great sanctification for ourselves, for the long-continued prayer, apparently so barren, shall have caused us to persevere and to advance in holiness; and then, on the other hand, who can tell from how many sins, from how many occa-

sions of falling, we may have saved the object of our prayers, though a perverse will may still form an obstacle in the path of complete conversion?

When we ask for our neighbor temporal good, health, or riches, or deliverance from some great calamity, there is yet one other striking reflection to be made. This sickness, this life of poverty, this grief, is precisely the means made use of by God to save the soul of him for whom you pray. Then is it not necessary for his true good, which is known to God far better than to you, that you should not obtain what you ask? Will your prayers therefore be lost? Far from it: they are, first for yourself, and then for your neighbor, an abundant source of graces far superior to those temporal blessings for which you have asked.

We might easily multiply examples, but the little we have said will suffice, I hope, to reanimate your faith in prayer. Pray with confidence; pray with deep human sympathy, and do not forget the counsel we have given when you lift your heart in prayer to God.

THE GREAT MISSION OF PRAYER.

When Jesus desired to establish His Church in this world, He chose twelve poor fishermen; and it was by instruments as weak as these, and as apparently ineffectual, that He willed to convert men, and that He did, in fact, convert them.

Just what Jesus did in the beginning, He does still, each day; and He gives to every one among us, however weak and insignificant we may be, a divine mission in the midst of His Church.

He intrusts His interests to us, He desires that we should all work for His glory, by procuring the salvation of our brethren. It is true that we ourselves are only very unworthy sinners, and it seems as if our own weaknesses and failures were so manifold that they might well prevent us from troubling about the salvation of others. And yet God requires of us that we should try to save our brethren. What then shall we do? Shall we go and preach in the public places? If we are workmen, servants, laborers, shall we leave our workshops, and our work, and exhort all sinners to do penance? Decidedly this is not what God expects of us. What then shall we do? Listen: we must pray. It is by prayer that we can accomplish our work. We must pray for each other; this is the command of God, and the teaching of the Apostle St. Paul. This is a truth often forgotten in these days, and the self-interest which

pervades and intermingles with all that we do is very often the cause of the little progress that we make in the service of God. How many among the faithful lament that they do not advance in virtue, that they gain no greater mastery over their passions, over their evil inclinations, over their self-love! They stand to-day just where they stood last year, and thus they grow discouraged. This is entirely because they are selfish, and only think of themselves when they pray. One would imagine, that beyond their own narrow limits there was nothing which concerned the glory of Jesus Christ. They never pray for their neighbor, and this want of charity hardens the heart and closes it against the grace of God.

If we did but consider the first words of our daily prayer, Our Father, that alone would suffice to remind us that we are all members of one great family, and that consequently the good of our brethren should be to us even as our own. We do not say, My Father, who art in heaven, . . . give me my daily bread . . . forgive me my trespasses. . . . But, by the command of God Himself, we say, Our Father, give us . . . forgive us. . . . Is it not clear that God, by teaching us to pray in this manner, desired us to have at heart the interests of all men, who are His children and our brethren?

Sometimes we do not know what to say to God when we desire to pray. Yet subjects for prayer are far from wanting. Think, for instance, who has greater need of assistance than our Holy Father the Pope, who is intrusted by Jesus Christ to govern the whole Church, and to decide all great questions relating to the glory of God? And whence is this assistance to come, if not from the prayers of those who belong to his great spiritual family? Must not the son always endeavor to help and comfort the father? I would say as much of all bishops, priests, and missionaries, and especially of the bishop of your own diocese, and of the priest of your own parish, who is charged by the bishop to teach the law of God, thus enabling you to avoid sin, and to save your soul, by becoming a true Christian. If the faithful of every diocese and every parish had but more charity and greater earnestness, if they prayed every day for the conversion of the irreligious, for the perseverance of their brethren in the faith, do you not believe that the efforts of our priests would be crowned with greater success, and that God would be better served?

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Pray, therefore; pray much, and pray often for the Pope, for bishops,

and for priests; pray for the conversion of sinners, and for the sanctification of the just, especially for those of your own country, of your parish, and of your own family. Who can tell that the salvation of your father, of your mother, of your husband, or your wife, of your child, or of your friend, does not hang upon that prayer which you are tempted to neglect? We shall one day learn, with deep confusion and bitter grief, how many souls we might have saved by the simplest means and by the easiest prayers: then the time will be past. Now that you have still the power, begin at once, and make reparation for the time you have lost. Determine that you will always add to your morning and evening prayers some special prayer for your neighbor; a memorare for instance, or even a decade of the rosary, for the Pope, for your bishop, for your parish priest, and for your confessor; for success to the preaching of missionaries over the whole earth, for the conversion of Protestants who do not know the true religion; pray for your country, and for those who govern it, that God may guide them in the right way, give them wisdom, and bless their efforts for the public good.

Believe me, if you will but pray thus, you will soon know by experience how good and useful it is to think of others, and to cultivate a universal sympathy; God will bless you, and will give you many great graces which you would not obtain, if, with a selfishness that is only too common, you thought of no one but yourself in your prayers.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

The second commandment God gave Himself upon Mount Sinai to His servant Moses; and when He came to dwell among us, the God of heaven and earth renewed this self-same law: "Swear not at all," He says in the Gospel, "but let your speech be Yea, yea; No, no: and that which is over and above these is of evil." And in the beautiful prayer which He Himself bequeathed to the world, Jesus commanded that, before all else, the sacred name of God should be hallowed and glorified: "Hallowed be Thy name!"

It is not necessary to insist upon the entire reasonableness of this divine law. Since God is the infinitely perfect Being, unutterably worthy of the deepest reverence and adoration, the very least that we can do is to speak with reverence His holy name. To pronounce the name of Jesus heedlessly, is to speak heedlessly of God Himself; to insult, blaspheme, or curse this adorable name is to insult and

curse the Lord. What could be more guilty? What could be greater madness? It is the vessel of potter's clay rebelling against the hand that formed it.

There are many different ways of sinning against the second commandment. The most grievous is that of which we have just spoken, viz., an outrage, or malediction uttered openly against God. This crime, for which in the ancient law men were immediately condemned to death and stoned, is, thank God, exceedingly rare.

It is very seldom that even those who are so carried away by passion as to utter words of blasphemy do really intend to curse God. If ever in the streets, or in your workshops, or in any company that you frequent, you should hear any of these terrible maledictions, never forget, if you are powerless to silence the blasphemer, to lift your heart to God, and to offer to Him a prayer of reparation; saying to Him, My God, may Thy holy name be blessed and glorified; forgive them, for they know not what they do!

There is a great difference between blasphemy and swearing by the name of God. A blasphemy is far more guilty than an oath, although the latter is most reprehensible. An oath consists of taking the name of God in vain; but a blasphemy implies a clear outrage, a direct insult, unless it is not truly uttered with a deliberate intention of evil; an undoubted blasphemy is a grievous sin, while an oath seldom reaches an equal degree of guilt. The workmen of the present day have almost all very evil habits in this respect. They drag the name of God into their common conversation, as if this forbidden word gave effect and piquancy to their discourse. There are those with whom this evil habit is so deeply rooted that they can scarcely speak a single sentence without bringing in the name of God. Parents and masters who suffer their children to fall into this coarse and impious language are deeply guilty, and will have to answer for it before God. If you should be among the number of those who have contracted such a habit, strive hard to correct yourself of it. Every day, when you say your morning prayer, renew your resolution not to swear; and if, by misfortune, you forget yourself, ask forgiveness of God directly you have perceived your fault. With a firm will and a little perseverance you will soon cease to swear at all.

Any one may be guilty of blasphemy without positively reviling the holy name of God. Hence, it would be a blasphemy to accuse God of cruelty or injustice, or even to say that God does not trouble

Himself about us, but abandons us to ourselves. Sometimes an excess of despair will cause us to give vent to words of this description, and they would constitute a very grievous sin if ungovernable grief did not partly excuse them. It would also be an utter blasphemy to say to a creature, when under the influence of passion, that you loved them more than God, that, for you, they held the place of God; or any mad words of this description, which may sometimes be met with in dangerous romances.

It is a blasphemy to revile religion, or the things of God; to rail, for instance, against the Blessed Sacrament, or the worship of the Blessed Virgin, or against images and the relics of the saints; to turn into derision the words of Holy Scripture, religious doctrines, or the ceremonies of divine worship. Blasphemy is a sin which is more or less grievous according to circumstances and the sanctity of the object blasphemed. There are many expressions familiar among people who have been badly brought up, the use of which does not certainly always involve sin, but which Christians should never allow themselves to utter.

Remember and practise these rules. Reverence with your whole heart all that relates to the Lord your God, and never lose sight of the second commandment of the divine law: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

In 1849 a terrible storm broke over the town of Toulouse. In the midst of it, two men might have been seen coming out of the door of a well-known public house, of which they were constant habitants. It was evident that they had been drinking much too freely, and they were now engaged in a noisy discussion upon different religious questions. They both prided themselves on their liberal opinions, and gloried in the name of free-thinkers; and as they walked on through the storm the thunder which rolled incessantly over their heads seemed to lash them up into a kind of senseless fury. Blasphemies of every description came from their lips, until at last one of them even dared to lift his clenched hand threateningly to heaven: "I defy Thee," he cried out, "strike me if Thou canst." The words were barely uttered, when the lightning flashed, and struck him where he stood, and stretched him motionless upon the earth. His terrified companion cast himself upon his knees, and prayed aloud for mercy; and when he had recovered from his fright, he placed his companion on his shoulders and carrried him to a house close by, where he returned to consciousness after many hours. We do not know whether he profited by this lesson, but it must be ac

knowledged that it would have been difficult for God to give one more prompt or more significant.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

God desired to preserve the true religion in a world which grew ever more and more corrupt, and therefore He chose for Himself a people to whom He gave certain special commandments.

Among these there was one which predominated over all the others, and the observance of which was designed to recall to man his entire dependence upon God. Whoever violated this commandment was punished with death; he was dragged, as one accursed, without the walls of the town, and, by the order of God Himself, was stoned to death.

This great commandment was the sanctification of the seventh day of the week. Upon that day the faithful were forbidden to employ themselves in any manual work; and they were bound to consecrate this day of bodily rest to special prayer, to the worship of God, to reading and meditation on the divine Word.

In the ancient law, this day of sacred repose, the day of the Lord was the Saturday, and not, as with us, the Sunday. The Saturday had been chosen by God in remembrance of the creation of the world, which had been completed in six days; on the seventh day, which answers to the Saturday, the divine work had ceased, and it was in memory of this rest of the Lord that the Jews were to celebrate the Saturday.

In the new law, Sunday has been substituted for Saturday, even as the Christian Church has been substituted for the Jewish Church. Sunday is indeed a day far greater and more holy, and the mysteries that it recalls are still more worthy of gratitude than the glorious mystery of creation.

On Sunday our divine Redeemer rose from the dead, victorious by this crowning miracle over death and sin and Satan; and it was on Sunday that He solemnly instituted His Church, by sending down upon her the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. By the sanctification of Sunday, Christians consecrate to God, in accordance with the primitive law, one day in the week; and they continually revive in their hearts the remembrance of those mysteries of love by which the Son of God wrought the redemption of the human race.

Sundays, and also the holy days of obligation, are observed by the

practice of two principal rules: first, by hearing mass; second, by resting from servile works.

I. By hearing mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation, under pain of mortal sin. The mass, which is the unbloody sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is the principal action, and the centre, as it were, of all divine worship. It is the great prayer of the Christian religion; it is the one supreme act of adoration and thanksgiving which we render to God through Jesus Christ His Son.

In parishes where there are many priests, and consequently many masses, the obligation is satisfied by hearing low mass. But as the high mass is the common gathering of all the children of God at the feet of their heavenly Father, every one should be present unless positively prevented; and so much the more, because this mass is said for the faithful of the parish, and it is at this alone that all recommendations, public prayers, announcements, and publications are made, and that a sermon or instruction is given.

It is necessary to hear the whole of the mass from the beginning to the end. Those who enter the church after the reading of the Gospel do not satisfy the obligation, and are bound to hear another mass. Those who arrive after the mass has begun, but before the Gospel, do certainly fulfil the command of hearing mass, but they commit a fault unless their delay was involuntary.

To observe this precept in the right way, it is necessary to behave becomingly during the holy sacrifice, to pray to God, and, in a word, to conform a serious act of religion. It is also forbidden to laugh, to look about, and even to speak without necessity in church.

Any one who chattered or slept during the whole of mass, or during a considerable part of it, would not fulfil the law, and would be obliged to assist with more devotion at another mass. Vespers, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the sermon, and other public devotions, are not positively commanded, but it is far better not to neglect them, and they offer the best means of keeping holy the Sundays and festivals. It is a very happy thing to see the faithful gathered together in great numbers in the church, lifting up both heart and voice, with one accord, in praise to God, and thus, by one united prayer, drawing down upon their parish heavenly benedictions. Parents and masters should accustom children to assist at the different offices of the Church with reverence and devotion. Who does not love to hear the pure fresh voices of little children lifted up to God in singing psalms and hymns?

II. In order to keep holy Sundays and holy days, it is not suffi-

cient to go to mass, or even to go to mass and vespers; it is also necessary to abstain from servile work. By servile work is especially understood the labor in which workmen, tradesmen, and day-laborers are engaged, since that is quite incompatible with the holy rest of the Sunday. Work which only occupies the mind, such as reading, etc., is not servile work, and is, consequently not forbidden. Neither does the commandment forbid that work which is necessary for the maintenance of life, nor that which is required for the ceremonies of divine worship. Thus servants may conscientiously perform all their necessary duties, and those who are employed about a church may clean and put it in order, arrange the altars, ring the bells, etc.

With the exception of the necessaries of life, it is also forbidden to buy and sell on Sundays and holy days. All shops should be closed, except chemists', inns, butchers', grocers', bakers', and generally speaking all shops of provisions; also every one must be able to go to church, the person who keeps the house being alone exempt.

Still, as it is impossible to provide for all cases, and as the practice of these rules must vary according to country and circumstance, it is always necessary to be guided by the opinion of a priest in any case of doubt or uncertainty. Masters or mistresses who, without real necessity, prevent those in their employment or service from hearing mass, and who oblige them to work, commit a very grievous sin, and are responsible before God for the omission, as well as for the scandal they have caused.

The non-observance of this law is one of the scourges of our time, and if we do not make a successful effort against this lamentable disobedience, the justice of God will assuredly fall heavily upon us. The Lord no longer condemns the disobedient to be stoned, but He prepares for them a terrible judgment, and the eternal punishment of hell. God is not mocked with impunity! sooner or later He asserts His sovereignty as the Lord and Master of the whole earth.

Therefore, render a hearfelt obedience to this great and holy law, and keep this third commandment of God deeply engraven on your memory: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

Our Lord said to us all on the day before His Passion, "I have given you an example, that as I have done so you do also." He is not only Our Lord and Saviour; He is also our perfect Example.

Among all the holy virtues of which He left us a pattern, there is one which He practised during the whole of His life, and the imitation of which is, for that reason, imperative upon all Christians: His reverence and obedience toward His mother and His adopted father. During His childhood, His youth, and even in His manhood, Jesus was subject in all humility to Mary and to Joseph; and, during the thirty years He passed at Nazareth, the Gospel tells us nothing of Him except that He was subject to His parents. "*Et erat subditus illis.*"

Our Lord thus practised the fourth commandment in the law of God His Father: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Like Him we should honor our parents; that is, we should reverence them and obey them, assist them in all their necessities, and surround them with care and affection. Let us reverence our parents, let us always reverence them, and never lose sight of the fact that they are the authors of our life, and that to them is intrusted the paternal authority of God Himself. A father and a mother should be always regarded with the deepest reverence; in their relations to their children they are invested with an inviolable truly sacred character, being representatives of the fatherhood and the providence of God. In the ancient law, he who struck or cursed his father or mother was considered as guilty of sacrilege, and, by the order of God, was punished with death. Even when our parents are not what they should be, we are bound to honor them, and the reason is very simple; good or bad, kind or unnatural, a father remains always a father; and therefore, because he is a father, and not because he is a good father, he has a right to the reverence of his children.

I know that, in practice, it is very difficult to recognize in a father or a mother who are unworthy of this holy name the representatives of the authority of God; but in this case faith must come to the help of nature, and it is for the sake of obedience to God that we must render to this father or this mother the honor and obedience that God Himself commands. How rare a thing this is in our time! As the result of a system of education which is wanting both in depth and in Christianity, the relation of children to their parents is almost everywhere one of deplorable freedom. They speak to them with most unbecoming familiarity; they calmly set aside their commands; they resist their authority and often clamor for their own will and opinions, until the home becomes a scene of turmoil and strife; and finally, they do not hesitate to discuss them with their friends and to criticise their actions in a most unwarrantable manner.

It is an imperative duty to honor our parents; but, by the fourth commandment, we are equally bound to obey them. For the authority of our father and our mother is a true and real authority of divine right, ordained by God Himself, who is the author and originator of family life. In all that is not clearly sin, a son is therefore bound to obey his parents; in everything that regards home education and choice of a position in life. This obedience must be more or less absolute according to the age of the child; as he grows older, it gradually becomes a kind of respectful deference, which should always accompany the relations of a son with his father, in whatever position, and under all circumstances. It need not be said that, if our parents should forget their duty and should command us to commit a sin, they would no longer have any claim on our obedience, because their voice would no longer be for us the outward expression of the divine will. Honor and obedience do therefore constitute the first duty of a son toward his father and mother.

Is this all? No, we must also love our parents, we must show them constantly a filial tenderness, an unselfish affection, and must prove to them in all their trials that we share their griefs, and that our hearts are touched by all that affects them. If the near relationship of a father and a mother constitute a visible providence for their children, the children should, in their turn, be the consolation of their parents, and render them care for care and love for love.

Is there anything holier or happier than to see a young man full of reverence and affection for his father, attentive to his mother's slightest wish, preferring their society to the companionship of young men of his own age, and caring more for the happiness of his own home life than for the pleasures and dissipations of the world? Such characteristics as these are the signs of true nobility of nature, and are deserving of the highest possible praise.

Is it necessary to add that children are bound to assist their parents in their necessities, and to do anything in their power rather than allow them to endure privation? For many years they have received from them food and clothing, the necessaries and often the superfluities of life; often hard work alone has been able to furnish the patient father and the devoted mother with resources sufficient to bring up their family; is it not most just that the children in their turn should provide for the wants of their parents, and should thus render to them all that they have themselves received? Woe to the worthless and ungrateful children who forget and neglect their pa-

ST. FRANCES.

ST. FRANCES

Honour widows that are widows indeed.—*I. Tim. v. 3.*

THE CHRISTIAN WIDOW'S RESIGNATION

TO see a husband whom one loves more than one's self taken from one by God, and to kiss lovingly the divine hand which strikes, is an act of heroic virtue on the part of the Christian widow. To accept widowhood generously, with all it brings of sorrow, loneliness, anxiety, and temporal care, is a proof of great faith and love of God. And when we consider great souls stricken by this supreme trial, we see in each the sublime spectacle of a tender heart broken, and of a will resigned.

"St. Hedwige, Duchess of Poland, who loved her husband, the Duke Henry, so tenderly that, in order to deliver him from the prison where the Duke Conrad had put him, she exposed herself to the greatest dangers, showed an admirable courage when her beloved husband was taken from her by death. As the nuns of Trebnitz were weeping over the loss of their powerful benefactor, she said to them: 'Why do you distress yourselves? Must we not submit to the will of God, who disposes of His creatures as He pleases? He gave us light: we ought to place our consolation in what He ordains for us and those who belong to us.'"—*Abbé Daras.*

"After the Crusade, when they brought back from the Holy Land the remains of the Duke Louis, her husband, to St. Elizabeth of Hungary, . . . she remembered God, and immediately her strength returned. 'I thank Thee, Lord,' she said, 'that Thou hast deigned to answer Thy servant and fulfil the immense desire I had to contemplate the remains of my beloved, who was Thine also. I thank Thee for having thus mercifully consoled my afflicted and troubled soul. He had offered himself, and I also had offered him, for the defence of the Holy Land, and I do not recall this sacrifice, although I loved him with all the strength of my soul. . . . Now I abandon him and myself to Thy will, and I would not, even if I could, redeem his life at the price of a single hair of my head, unless it were Thy will, O my God!'"—*M. de Montalembert.*

"Accept the cross a thousand times a day as a rich present, and kiss it gladly for the love of Him who sends it you. Say to Him, like David, 'I was dumb, and I opened not my mouth, because Thou hast done it.'"—*St. Francis de Sales to St. Jane Frances de Chantal.*

"If in good earnest you abandon and renounce yourselves, you will find an incomparable sweetness in God's service, and it will be your delight to trample on self-love for the advancing of the kingdom of grace. It is the reward God promises to the conqueror."—*St. Jane Frances de Chantal, widow.*

rents in their old age, and who thus close their hearts to the truest instincts of nature as well as to the teachings of religion!

Let us render, therefore, a sacred reverence, a religious and perfect obedience, an unselfish and unbounded love to those to whom we are united by this holy tie. Such is the law of God. Let us never forget to pray for them each day, so that, by the mercy of God, we may all be happily reunited in heaven. Our father and mother were the instruments by which God created us, and brought us into this world; and He created us only that He might thus bestow upon us an eternal happiness hereafter. It is there, even in the bosom of the eternal Godhead, that our heavenly Father desires to gather the whole family together, when the labors of life are done; it is there that He desires to unite us to those who have gone before us; and it is there that He desires to bestow on us not only a long life, but an eternal life—the life which He promises to those who keep the fourth commandment. "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land."

TO FATHERS AND MOTHERS.

FATHERS and mothers, you are the visible divinities of your children. They see none greater than you, they see none so often as you, they love no one so much as you. They often hear of God, of the Pope, of the king, but they do not see them; while they have you every day before their eyes as the living models of their actions. You are everything for them. The life which they have derived from you they preserve only by your care, and you are their sole dependence for the future. Now, a child has much of the monkey in its nature; it imitates, it repeats all that it sees, all that it hears. This is especially the case with regard to its father and mother. Its great ambition is to imitate them in all they do. From this fact there arises for fathers and mothers a binding obligation to lead good and holy lives themselves, that their children may thus follow them in the right way.

The heart of a child is as wax, capable of receiving any impression, good or bad; it is as plain white linen, upon which all colors may be stamped. It is to parents that God has intrusted the care of impressing on these young pure hearts all true and virtuous feelings —those first impressions which are never completely effaced. If they are careful to inculcate in their children the sentiment of duty, the love and fear of God, a horror of sin, and the necessity of religion

they lay the foundation of the future happiness of these little ones whom the providence of God has confided to their care. If they do not do all this, the hearts of their children become as land which is neither tilled nor planted, as land which was ready to bring forth fruit, but which, for want of care and labor, produces nothing but briars and thorns.

And how great is the providence of God in this! The child thus unconsciously becomes in its turn a means of salvation to its parents. Obliged to teach the right, not only in words but also by example, they often find themselves drawn on to do, in the sight of their child, some good action which they would otherwise have neglected, and to avoid a thousand faults which might have an evil influence on the innocence of their child.

During a violent religious persecution in the empire of Japan, two Christians were every day expecting martyrdom, and were preparing themselves by fervent prayer. They had only one child, scarcely five years old. The tender age of their little boy, whom they would so soon be obliged to leave alone and unprotected upon earth, was the cause of their deepest anxiety. Speaking one day on this sad subject, they were saying to each other: "With the grace of God we shall have strength to suffer and even to die for our faith, but what will become of this poor little one? Ignorant of the things of God, and of the holiness of the religion of Jesus Christ, will he not renounce it at the first threat, or rather at the first command?" During their conversation the child seemed to be amusing himself without noticing anything they said. He was playing with an iron and stirring about the coals in the fireplace. When the iron was red-hot, he drew it out, and, turning toward his parents without speaking, he placed it on his hand and left it there. "What are you doing, my dear child?" cried the terrified mother. "I wanted to show you," said the little fellow gravely, "that with God's help I shall be able to bear pain as well as you, rather than give up the religion that you practise." The father and mother embraced him tenderly, shedding tears of joy, and thanking God for having given them such a child. A few days after they were seized by the persecutors, and, remaining faithful unto death, received together with their child the palm of martyrdom. Thus were they rewarded for the good teaching and the constant care which they had given to this holy child, who so happily profited by the sacred lessons he received.

The widow of a Chinese mandarin, converted by our missionaries, had one little girl, an only child still of a very tender age. She led

her one day into her oratory, and kneeling before the crucifix prayed silently; then turning to her child, who was kneeling at her side, she said, "God only knows how much I love you, my dear little one; you are my only treasure upon earth, and the only pledge of his affection that your father left to me when dying; but if I believed it possible that you could ever abandon Jesus Christ, or lose your innocence, I would ask God to take you to Himself, to call you instantly out of this world. Very far from weeping for you, I would array myself as for a festival, and would esteem your death as a great blessing and favor from God."

These words recall those spoken by Queen Blanche to St. Louis, her son, during his childhood: "I would rather see you die before my eyes, than see you commit a single sin." All Christian mothers should constantly repeat them to their children.

There are fathers and mothers who lose, and there are those who save their children. Their loss or ruin will be their own loss, while their salvation will surely prove their own also.

Like father, like son; and still more, like mother, like child. If you love your children, fathers and mothers, if not for yourselves at least for love of them, be good Christians, scrupulously observe the laws of God and of His Church; avoid sin, repress your passions, consider your words, be constant in prayer, swear not, do not argue and dispute, guard against anger; reverence all that relates to God, His ministers, and His temple; so live that your child may need nothing but your daily example to guide him now in the path of right, and that hereafter the memory of his childhood may be still a pure and holy influence to draw him nearer heaven.

EARLY EDUCATION.

THE bear's cub, when first brought into the world, is merely a shapeless mass; neither head nor eyes can be distinguished. The father and mother, impelled by the instinct God has given them, instantly begin to lick their young one vigorously, and thus in a manner they fashion this imperfect body, and through their care and patience, little by little, the head, the eyes, and the claws of the cub appear, and it begins to assume its natural shape.

If parents will pardon this comparison, we would propose this example to them. When God gives them a child, He gives them at the same time a mission to fashion, to form it for good, and to make it in all things a Christian child. With bears, it is the tongue that

performs this work of formation; with men, it is also the tongue which should be their instrument in this great work, not by licking certainly, but by speaking. What may not be done by the words, the influence of a father and a mother! The nature of the child is utterly in their hands and is ready to receive any impression: if these are good and holy, the heart of the little child will be formed according to the will of God; it will be pure and loving, and good and true; if, on the contrary, the pliable character of the child is warped and misdirected from the very beginning, a germ of evil will be planted in the soul, and the poor child will grow up with defects which will quickly deform, and will finally prove its destruction.

Therefore, spare no trouble, fathers and mothers, in this first work, this first influence over the minds of your children: the impressions of childhood are never completely effaced. Education begins from the cradle, and on the mother's knees. Teach your child first of all, to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him; teach him to lisp the sacred name of Jesus, and the holy name of Mary; guide the little innocent hand to make the holy sign of the cross, even before the child can understand its meaning; and in all the simple stories that you tell him, strive to teach him something of the history of Our Lord, and of the lives of the saints. A little girl of four or five years old was sitting one day on her father's knee, when she clasped her arms round his neck, and kissed him repeatedly. "Do you love me so very much?" he asked her. "Oh, yes!" answered the child; "I do love you dearly, but I love God best." Never spoil your children by a blind and foolish affection. There is much meaning in the words, to spoil a child. To spoil a work is to ruin it, to render it useless, to destroy it; and this is exactly what is done by those weak and mistaken parents who spoil their children, that is to say, by those who neglect to foster a constant sense of duty, who yield to all their caprices, who indulge them foolishly and systematically, who allow them to fall into habits of waywardness, ill-temper, impertinence, greediness, and curiosity; in one word, who caress when they are bound to punish, and, consequently, never fail in the end to make these little people perfectly unbearable.

In our own age, in town and country, among rich and poor, it is an almost universal custom for the children to be lords and masters in the house, and to see both father and mother at their knees. This is the world turned upside down; spoilt children can never be anything but indifferent men, even if they escape being something worse. What importance, therefore, may we not attach to early

education! All of which advice we offer to the consideration of parents who really love their children, and truly desire to promote their happiness.

THE SECOND EDUCATION.

THE duties of a father and mother with regard to their children increase in proportion as the child grows older. It is the part of the parents to instil into the heart of their child upright principles and Christian feelings, and thus to form or build up his future character. A good mother is, if not the first confessor, at least the first confidant of the budding conscience of her son and of her daughter; and when years shall render this ministry of affection insufficient, it is still the mother's part to initiate the child to a still more solemn confidence, and to prepare it with love and tenderness for the important duty of a first confession.

All truly Christian parents should most carefully guard their child's first steps in life; they should never leave him to venture alone, without help or guidance, in the midst of innumerable dangers which he must meet at every step; they should carefully choose his friends and companions, and separate him from any who would be likely to do him harm—from those who have been badly brought up, and whose words and ideas might instil the first principles of evil; also, as a general rule, from all who belong to parents of doubtful reputation. How many poor children are first initiated in vice and lose their childlike innocence for want of this much-needed watchfulness! Nine out of ten may have been ruined by the influence of bad companions.

At twelve or thirteen years of age, after the first communion, parents should redouble their care, in order to urge their child to persevere in that good path upon which he has now entered. For now come the most dangerous and perhaps the most difficult years of life. This age resembles that Cape of Storms which is notable for so many shipwrecks; only the best-manned and best-directed vessels escape the peril. This dangerous age of early youth, so charming when it is pure and innocent, so disastrous when it is not, should engross the entire care and thought of every good father and mother. If it is necessary that the child should leave his own home and go among strangers, before all things it is needful to provide for the sacred interests of the soul, and to place him amid good influences, and among such surroundings that the practice of religion, far from

being impossible to him, shall, on the contrary, be pleasant and easy, thus, it is necessary to avoid any calling which is incompatible with an observance of the Sunday; any position, school, or college, in which the young man may not easily, if he desire, fulfil his religious duties, confess, go to Holy Communion, assist at the different offices of the Church, and thus insure his Christian perseverance. Parents need never doubt but that they will be fully rewarded for all the care they may take for this purpose; their children, by remaining Christians, will continue to be their happiness and comfort; they will shun those vices by which young men often dishonor their families and change into bitter tears the hopes of their early years. How often the sorrow and trouble by which fathers and mothers are overwhelmed toward the close of their lives is trouble which they have entirely brought upon themselves; they reap what they have sown by their neglect, their want of faith, and by the few good examples with which they surrounded the early youth of their son, or of their daughter! But, on the other hand, how happy and peaceful are the closing years of life to the father and mother who have spent their days in one lifelong endeavor to make their children true and earnest Christians! They, too, shall reap what they have sown; fruits of peace and joy and love, of which death itself shall not be able to deprive them, and which shall follow them even unto the bosom of their God.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

THE life that God has given us is the most precious and the most fundamental of His gifts. Every other benefit that Providence bestows, implies and supposes this first benefit of all. To live is, therefore, the primary of the rights of man. He who first dared to violate this sacred right, and to attempt the life of another man, was the execrable Cain, the eldest of the sons of Adam. He had one only brother, younger than himself, and also holier, more gentle, more amiable, and consequently more beloved.

Pride and envy entered into the heart of Cain; the devil, who by means of original sin had taken from man his spiritual life, desired to carry his ravages still further and to destroy the life of the body. He inspired Cain with a terrible determination to kill his brother Abel; and one day, when they had gone together to offer a sacrifice to God, Cain rose up against his brother and murdered him. Thus Cain (and Satan with him) became the first homicide

The fury of evil passions has often renewed this horrible crime, of which Cain himself said, "My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon." All men who commit this sin are called homicides.

Parricide is the term applied to the unnatural son who murders his father or mother; Infanticide, to the father or mother who murder their child; Regicide, to the man who dares attempt the life of his sovereign; and finally, a Suicide is the man who kills himself.

There has been, however, one homicide more guilty and more terrible than any we have named: it is that which was committed upon Good Friday on Mount Calvary, by the Deicidal Jews, upon the adorable Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Homicide is forbidden by the fifth commandment.

God, who is the author of all life, also constitutes Himself its guardian, and forbids every man to take away, unjustly, the life of his neighbor. We say unjustly, because there are circumstances in which we are permitted or even commanded to deprive a man of life; for instance, when confronted by an assassin who desires to murder us, or by an enemy in war.

It is also the right and the duty of sovereigns, by the command of God Himself, to put all great criminals to death, not only in order to purge society, but also to punish them, and to make them serve as an example to others.

But, beyond these exceptional cases it is, we repeat, strictly forbidden to attempt the life of any one under any pretext whatsoever.

We are even forbidden to run a great risk of killing any one; by scientific experiments, for instance; by laying senseless and dangerous wagers; by duelling, etc. To kill any one by accident and without intention, is not a crime but a misfortune.

Such homicides would, however, be guilty, if the persons who committed them might have avoided them by taking ordinary precautions. If we are forbidden to take away our neighbor's life, we are equally forbidden to take away our own. Our life does not belong to us any more than does that of our fellow-men. It belongs to God alone, and God alone can dispose of it. Suicide is a crime beyond forgiveness; it is the only one which cannot be pardoned, because it is the only one which takes away all possibility of repentance. It is pre-eminently, the sin against the Holy Ghost, who is the author of all life.

If any unfortunate man, overwhelmed by misery, should be tempted to despair, let him revolt against the terrible thought, that

the devil will perhaps inspire him to destroy himself; and let him remember that, in exchange for the transient and endurable afflictions of earth, he will condemn himself to the eternal fires of hell, and to the incomprehensible misery of damnation.

The fifth commandment forbids us to kill our fellow-men and to kill ourselves; but it goes still further. It also forbids us to do anything which could unjustly injure the life, health, well-being, or reputation of our neighbor. Thus, he who should take advantage of the poverty of one of his fellow-men, to impose on him some work beyond his strength, would sin against this commandment. In this case the law itself protects the interests of poor workmen and apprentices; it fixes the hours of work which may not be exceeded, and imposes severe penalties upon all classes of employers who should venture to do so.

But often these wise regulations are not put into execution, and the sin of those who have dared to violate them remains unpunished upon earth. Then God Himself will execute justice and will avenge the cause of the poor, the weak, and the friendless whom He loves.

Again, all parents or masters who refuse their children or dependents the necessaries of life sin against the fifth commandment. There are in the world certain avaricious and hard-hearted people who only seek to grow rich, and care nothing for the health or well-being of those whom they employ; they will let them grow ill and die rather than consult a doctor or put themselves to any inconvenience. Is not such cruelty a veritable homicide?

And again, this sin is committed, although under another phase, by the slanderer who destroys the reputation of his neighbor, the fair fame without which life is often unendurable. A good reputation is a most valuable possession, and no man has the right unjustly to deprive another of it. Therefore, he who, without real necessity, destroys the reputation of his neighbor, is guilty of a moral assassination. "The tongue is an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison."

Slander is a great evil, but, what is more, it is an irreparable evil. The slanderer has not even the same resource as the calumniator, who can, by retracting his words and accusing himself, repair the ill that he has done; because, since slander consists in making known some wrong-doing that has truly been committed by another, it is not possible to retract, since a retraction would be a lie. Slander is, therefore, as irremediable as assassination. At the same time, it is not a grievous sin except when it bears upon matters of serious consequence.

Lastly, the fifth commandment forbids all hatred, anger, conflicts, blows, and wounds; it forbids the spirit of vengeance, and everything which might injure the body or life of our fellow-men. Much more might be said upon this subject, and many circumstances might be related in support of what we have said. But I hope that these few words will suffice to increase in your hearts a right regard for your neighbor, to throw a stronger light upon your principal duties with respect to his life, his well-being, and his reputation, and to induce you to practise more faithfully for the future all that is implied and divinely enforced by the fifth commandment of God.

SUICIDE.

Two soldiers, both sergeants in a French regiment, having leave one afternoon, went together to visit a compatriot who happened to be ill in the military hospital. In the bed next to that of their friend was another sick man; a man so terribly disfigured that it was painful to look at him; his nose and lips and chin were all seamed and shapeless with still recent scars. "Who could have been brutal enough to disfigure that poor fellow so horribly?" whispered one of the soldiers to his friend. "Scars like that will not help him in winning a wife!" "He did it himself," was the answer in the same low tone; "he attempted to kill himself, but he missed his aim and disfigured his face as you see! Now he thanks God for having left him on earth in spite of himself, and he swears to me that the devil will be troubled to get hold of him again. He was in great trouble—who is not in trouble at times? and he lost all control over himself, and fancied he could not endure to live longer; now he is thankful to live, even in all the suffering that those frightful wounds cause him!"

The conversation lasted some little time longer, and then the two sergeants left their friend; but they could not refrain from casting a compassionate glance in the direction of his suffering neighbor, and left the hospital much impressed by this sad spectacle. "What a fool a man must be to kill himself!" said one, when they were one more alone. "He wants to escape from some grief or trouble tha he fancies he cannot endure, as if any trouble were eternal, as if fine weather did not always come after rain, and days of happiness after days of sadness. How often you see a man on the brink of despair one day, and quite comforted and hopeful on the next. A man kills himself, say, for love of some heartless woman, who only laughs at

his despair, and whose vanity will be increased by the thought that a man actually killed himself because of her. If he had only had the patience to live a week or two longer, both love and misery would have flown away together. Or a fellow kills himself on account of some debt he cannot pay, or some disgrace he thinks he cannot avoid, and perhaps even at that very moment some friends, some unlooked for providential help may be waiting at the door, ready to provide the money needed, or to avert the humiliation." "You are right," interrupted his friend, "and we have just had a very striking example of what you say. A sergeant-major in our regiment, who had indulged in extravagant amusements, took fifty francs from a desk. Upon the point of being discovered, he wrote to his parents, who failed to reply as quickly as he expected; he then applied by letter to an officer whom he knew intimately; one day passed, and he heard nothing from him. The man lost all control over himself, and became like one distraught; he saw himself condemned, dishonored, lost, and resolving to escape dishonor by suicide (just as if it were the punishment that made the dishonor and not the sin itself), he shut himself in his room and blew out his brains! An hour had scarcely passed, and his body was not yet cold, when the officer to whom he had written entered his room, bringing him the sum he had asked for; he had not been able to come before, and thus only because he did not know how to wait a few hours, the unfortunate sergeant had lost at one blow the life of his body . . . and something which is of higher value still."

These two sergeants were good and earnest Christians, and here we may say that the ranks of the army, with their ever-increasing number of good Catholic soldiers, fill one full of hope for the future —they were faithful in prayer, and scrupulously avoided all bad companionship, drinking, and sinful excesses. Courageously indifferent to the raillery of comrades of another order, they preserved in the regiment the Christian habits of their youth. We need not seek far for the secret of their perseverance, since they never passed a month without approaching the sacraments. "What folly," continued the soldier with animation, "and what selfishness, too, to sacrifice all duty, all affection, to a mere desire to escape from suffering! This miserable man thought only of himself, and yet, perhaps, he had a mother who depended entirely upon him, who will never cease to weep for him, and who will die bereft of the love and care he owed her. 'Let my mother weep,' he seems to say; 'let her grow old in grief and solitude; I cannot help it, my life is hateful to me,

and I will bear it no longer!' Or perhaps he had a sister, a wife who loves him, friends to whom his death would bring sorrow and trouble. . . . 'So much the worse for them if they suffer; but I —I will suffer no more!' And our country—what would become of it if all her sons acted thus? 'My country, let her do as she can; once dead, what is all the world to me?' This is just what is said by the man who destroys his own life, not in word but in deed, and is it not a most ignoble egotism?

"And then it is such cowardice. A man kills himself because he has not the courage to live. For a brave man, and above all for a Christian, there is no suffering which cannot be borne. In nine cases out of ten, the troubles that come upon us are the natural consequences of our own faults, our own passions, our own sins. When a man has sufficient courage to commit a crime, he should surely not be wanting in courage to expiate it. It is vain to assert that there are circumstances in which he is, as it were, bound to pass sentence upon himself and to deprive himself of an existence of which he is utterly unworthy; every man is of use in this world who does his duty, and sets an example of resignation and courage and repentance; and to pass sentence upon himself is only to commit a further outrage upon true justice, upon the justice of men, and upon the justice of God! In whatever may be said to the contrary, the only real expiation consists in submission to a merited punishment, and in sincere repentance.

"Experience proves that, however shameful the crime, the grace of repentance can always efface it, and once more raise the guilty man, not only in the sight of God, but even in the eyes of men. Is not the penitent thief a saint in heaven now?

"If an assassin die upon the scaffold, and if in dying he accept his suffering, if he humiliate himself beneath the hand which strikes him, if he welcome death as a righteous expiation, then, at that very instant, hatred and contempt become changed into pity and sympathy—I might almost say into respect—and the assassin will die beneath the hand of the executioner absolved and pardoned even in the opinion of men. Who, when witnessing a bitter repentance, can dwell upon the sins of the past?"

"You speak like a book," replied his friend, "and what is more, like a good book. For my part, a man who commits suicide always reminds me of a deserter. It is not sufficient to desert and to escape the weariness of service, you have afterward to escape the council of war. And if you sometimes succeed in eluding that, there is yet an-

other council of war which no man can avoid. What must that moment be in which he appears at the tribunal of the great God whom he has boldly defied in death as in life, and who requires a terrible account both of life and of death! That man must have a strangely constituted mind who can choose an eternity of misery in preference to those earthly trials which, however bitter, are never without some alleviation, if it consist only in the certainty that they will soon be ended." "Yes," said his comrade, laughing, "it is just like the man who walked into the river, that he might not be wet by the rain! How much better to suffer here than hereafter; we are happy in having faith."

Thus talking, the two soldiers reached their barracks, where we will take leave of them.

Take a lesson from the self-same school. I hope that you will have a life of unclouded happiness, but the future is known to God alone, and I can predict without the gift of prophecy, that He will send you trials here below. However grievous these may be, do not grow discouraged; never abandon yourself to despair; remind yourself constantly that the sufferings of this world are only for a time; that heaven, with all its joys, awaits him who shall have borne them with Christian fortitude; and if ever the frightful temptation to self-destruction should present itself to your heart, turn away from it with fear and shuddering. Suicide is the one crime which is beyond forgiveness, because it is the only crime which is beyond repentance!

SCANDAL.

To cheat and to steal are, certainly, not virtuous actions; if we do either, we sin against God, our neighbor, and ourselves; but to give scandal to others is still worse, for this is one of the greatest dangers which can menace the soul. Scandal is the evil which we do to others by the bad example that we give them.

A man does wrong, no one knows it; he is guilty in the sight of God; he will lose his own soul if he do not repent. This is very certain and very lamentable, but at least his example has perverted no one. But suddenly a man hides his wrong-doing no longer, his evil life becomes known and spoken of, he even speaks of it himself, boasts of it, and appears to glory in a miserable notoriety. Others, attracted at first by curiosity, begin to make a little circle round him, and to regard him with admiration. "At all events this man must get some pleasure and excitement out of life!" they begin to say;

and thus it follows that the evil which they regarded too closely strikes them, they are gradually overpowered by it; and next we may see them enjoying themselves after the manner of their model; they imitate him, and soon they desire to go still further than he! This is scandal!

One man offended God; at this hour there are ten, a hundred, a thousand. . . . Death strikes the author of this scandal; he goes to stand before his heavenly Judge and render an account of all those thousand souls lost by his example!

Thus you see how incalculable are the effects of bad example. How is it possible completely to retrieve a scandal? We may desire to do it, but often it is quite beyond our power. Our Lord said, "Woe to that man by whom scandal cometh. It were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea." He who knows everything, knew well that those who give scandal to their brethren stand upon the brink of their own eternal ruin! But, on the other hand, how happy a thing it is to give a good example! It is to work in union with God Himself for the salvation of souls. And how great is this power which each one of us possesses! Consider the case of a young man who has been so unhappy as to give scandal to others by setting them an evil example; if he only examine himself, if he reflect, and consider the terrible account he will have to render, he becomes changed and converted; he was openly wicked, and is now openly a Christian! His companions ridicule him; he pities them, he advises them to imitate him in his conversion; he sets an example of patience and temperance, of industry and morality, and, in the end, succeeds in saving a great number of those whom he would most certainly have led to destruction.

It is impossible to calculate the immense influence of example. By means of this all-powerful influence whole families, parishes, schools, and communities are either saved or lost. I have known a numerous family, worse than indifferent, become a model of religion and fervor, thanks to the holy influence of but one of its members, who, by turning to God with his whole heart, caused the light of faith to shine upon all who surrounded him through the force of example alone. And I have known another family in which the apostasy of the eldest son led away into heresy a number of his brothers and sisters. . . . How many parishes have been perverted, corrupted to their very centres by the scandal given by one bad priest! In a college, in a school, one thoroughly bad child will entice into evil the

greater part of his schoolfellows, and if the superiors do not arrest the contagion from its very commencement, by driving this black sheep out of their midst, the whole flock will surely be lost. And finally, in a State, how incalculable are the evils, which, by a fatal necessity, are always produced by the immorality of a sovereign or by his irreligion! Now, what is the conclusion to be drawn from all this? That scandal is an immense evil. He who has given scandal has but one chance of salvation, and that is by becoming entirely changed and setting a good example to those whom he formerly scandalized.

Human respect will often prove a stumbling-block; but we must gather courage; those who have dared to do evil must also dare to be repentant in the sight of all.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

By the sixth commandment God forbids us to defile by sin the body He has given us. Our body, the living temple of our soul, is consequently the temple of Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and this temple must be holy. Impurity is the terrible vice by which Satan, the enemy of Jesus Christ, and our own untiring foe, desires to soil this sanctuary of God.

Our body does not belong to us; God has not given, but has lent it to us, in order that we may do with it not what we will, but what He wills. He alone remains its Lord and Master; our soul possesses the body not as a right, but as a trust, of which it must render an account. We are not free to do with our body just what we desire, but are bound in strict justice, whether we will or not, to keep it in submission to the authority of its true master.

Purity or chastity is the virtue which accomplishes in the flesh the designs and will of God. By means of it the senses are subservient to the soul, which is itself subservient to Jesus Christ; and thus perfect order reigns.

Satan detests purity, and endeavors by constant attacks, which we call temptations, to disturb and trouble this tranquillity; and, by causing the flesh to rebel against the spirit, he tries to shake the soul itself, and to separate it from Jesus Christ by sin. When the tempter approaches us in this manner, let us have recourse to God by prayer, and never voluntarily consent to temptation.

There can be no sin without the will to sin, and we should despise such ignoble temptations. Besides prayer, the surest means to pre-

serve purity, and to conquer all attacks against it, consists in constant employment, in frequent communion, and in devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

We do not desire, nor are we able to enter here into details. Let it suffice to say that the sixth commandment forbids all words, looks, and actions, in a word everything, that is contrary to purity. It commands us to be modest and chaste, to avoid everything which can excite the senses or open the door to the devil. We must, therefore, if we desire to remain faithful to God, most carefuly shun all occasions of sin, such as evil company, pernicious books, and dangerous pleasures; and as these vary infinitely, according to the age, position, and character of each individual, there is no other rule to give than that all should follow the practice of good Christians, and be guided by the advice of their confessor.

Impurity is a scourge for the health of the body as well as for the sanctity of the soul. It causes death, and thus religion, by helping us to avoid its fatal blows, is our temporal benefactress, as well as the mother of our souls and the guardian of our salvation. How many have seen their youth, their beauty, their health, their life, wither in ignominy by reason of impurity alone; and in how many souls it has tarnished the source of true joy and pure affections, of peace and of real happiness! It is utterly detestable; it is the enemy of men as well as the enemy of God; the enemy of the body as well as the enemy of the soul; it should be hated on earth as it is hated in heaven. And yet, behold the corruption of the world! This terrible vice is everywhere regarded with the greatest leniency; it covers itself with flowers; it hides its infection under the mask of pleasure and happiness; it usurps the holy and divine name of love, and thus drags down to the lowest depths the noblest and most sublime sentiments of the soul.

God has Himself reserved for all such sinners the fearful punishment of the eternal fires of hell, that fire of which He Himself has said that it shall never be extinguished. "*Ignis eorum non extinguetur.*" When we are tempted to sin against holy purity let us think of hell. We should say to the body, "Thou dost pretend that it is impossible to conquer thy passions, that this temptation is irresistible! How wilt thou then be able to endure consuming fires, and to dwell eternally in flames with Satan?"

We may find in Holy Scripture a terrible example of the hatred felt by God to this sin of impurity, viz., in the punisment of the town of Sodom. Given up, beyond all other cities, to a frightful ex

cess of depravity, this infamous town was consumed with all its inhabitants by a miraculous and sulphurous fire which enveloped it by the command of God. Reduced to ashes, and still visible in the depths of the Dead Sea, it remains forever as a witness of divine vengeance, as a warning to sinners, as an earthly manifestation of the punishment of impurity by eternal fire, and lastly as the most impressive confirmation of the sixth commandment of God: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

DRUNKENNESS.

THERE is a certain fearful malady which ravages and devastates the whole world. There is no country free from its inroads; it is to be met with in France as in England, in Europe as in America, among people who call themselves civilized just as among barbarians. For many centuries it has decimated humanity, and has been the ruin of the working classes.

You will think, perhaps, that I am speaking of the plague, or of cholera, or of some pestilence of this description! But no, the sickness to which I refer is much more to be dreaded! . . . It is a far more mortal sickness; and it is doubly terrible, because it does not only kill the body but even destroys the soul, and its lamentable influence extends beyond the grave!

It is called drunkenness. This it is which degrades and brutalizes the miserable man who once yields to its fatal tyranny! It is this which is the ruin of families, and which is thus most frequently the cause of that frightful poverty which is to be witnessed in large towns.

Drunkenness is the habit of drinking immoderately. Intoxication when quite involuntary is not a sin. It is a sin more or less grievous, as it is more or less wilful; and also according to the extent of the excess. It is always a grievous fault voluntarily to lose the use of reason.

"Be not deceived," say the Holy Scriptures, "drunkards shall not enter into the kingdom of God."

I. Drunkenness debases and degrades a man. What distinguishes men from brutes? Is not reason his noblest prerogative? Now, what does the drunkard do? How does he use his intelligence? Does he not reduce himself to a state of stupidity in which he knows no longer what he says nor what he does? His feet tremble beneath him, his eyes grow dim, his tongue stammers foolishly; instead of

walking he stumbles on his way, and defiles himself with the mire and clay in which his feet are slipping! Is not the dog which passes by him a nobler animal than he? Poor fallen humanity!

The magistrates of Sparta used to expose in public a drunken slave in order to inspire their youth with a horror for this vice. "What monster is this?" cried the crowd; "he has the face of a man, but he has the nature of a beast!"

II. Drunkenness enfeebles the health and shortens the life. Intoxication exhausts and weakens the frame, however great the physical strength may naturally be. Experience proves it. The ordinary effect of wine, of brandy, and of all intoxicating drinks, is to carry the blood violently to the head; and thus, punished by the very instrument of his sin, apoplexy and sudden death are the usual chastisements which await the drunkard. An unfortunate soldier, having one day drunk to an excess, fell into such a state of intoxication that it brought on fever, and then inflammation of the brain, which left him forever bereft of reason. Great God! what a state was this in which to appear before Thy divine tribunal!

III. Drunkenness inflames the passions, and brings misery into every home. Woe to the woman who has a drunkard for her husband! and still more, woe to the husband and the children of the woman who drinks! Without speaking of the want of morality which almost always accompanies this terrible habit, is there anything more debased than a man overcome with wine? When he returns home, after having squandered all the earnings of the week so sadly needed by his family, he finds himself face to face with a hopeless or exasperated woman. If she meet him with just reproaches, then, heated by drink, and half-distraught, he becomes furious, gives vent to imprecations, sets a terrible example to his unfortunate children, and ill-treats both them and their unhappy mother! What an infamous spectacle! Tears on one side; oaths and violence on the other; are not such homes as these reflections and images of hell?

St. Augustine relates that a young man in the town, named Cyril, who, in the society of worthless companions, passed his days in a state of intoxication, having one day yielded to an excess of intemperance, returned home, and stabbed one of his sisters who reproached him with his condition. At the crisis of the victim the father hastened to the spot, and Cyril then dared to lift his hand against him who gave him life, and killed him as he had killed his sister. St. Augustine, being immediately informed of this execrable

crime, assembled his people in the church, and although he had already preached twice that day, ascended the pulpit and made known to his hearers the terrible sin into which drunkenness had led one of their fellow-citizens. His sobs and his emotion spoke more loudly than his words. The greatest distress was visible throughout the whole assembly, and all joined in fervent prayer to avert those strokes of divine justice which might be expected to fall upon the city in which so monstrous a crime had been perpetrated. Poor wives, who have the misfortune of being united to husbands who are drunkards, never reproach them when you see them in this state. How can you benefit a man who is capable of neither feeling nor reflection? Turn to God, who, in all our troubles, is ever ready to comfort and console us. Pray constantly and untiringly for the conversion of your husband. In prayer alone you win a means to lighten your burden, and to avoid offending God.

Children, who have witnessed the sinful excesses of your father, guard yourselves from following his example, and, taught by a frightful experience, promise God to walk in a totally opposite way.

But for yourselves, drunkards, my poor friends, should the providence of God ever permit these simple pages to come within your sight, I say to you, Take courage; and should it even be necessary for you to renounce entirely that which is the means of leading you to perdition, do not hesitate, be converted, live a changed life, become honest men and earnest Christians. Awake to the moans and lamentations of the wife you render miserable. Awake to the tears and cries of the little children you are dragging down to utter beggary. Awake to the thunderings of the anger of God. Behold! hell is open before you; and you will most surely fall into it if you still persist in sin.

Then, have confidence in God, who is ever ready to pardon all things to him who repents. Lose no time, but have recourse at once to Divine mercy, and profit by the time that is left to you, and which is perhaps shorter than you think, to obtain, by true repentance, the pardon of past sins.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

With the exception of the professional sharper, every one agrees in acknowledging the culpability and infamy of theft. Upon this point people quite without religion think just the same as Christians.

The seventh commandment of God condemns theft, and it is this

commandment which I desire to explain with several details. These details, rest assured, are not superfluous; a number of people will grant a general principle without understanding all the consequences which result from it, and even those who grant most willingly that it is forbidden to steal are sometimes surprisingly clever in blinding themselves as to the nature of certain forbidden profits which, in clear language, ought to be called thefts.

To steal is to take something which does not belong to us without having any right to it; it is to sin against our neighbor by appropriating what is lawfully his. It is not here necessary to demonstrate that it is wrong to steal. "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," says the law of God. Should you be willing for any one to take your clothes, your money, your house, your field, or anything that belongs to you? Should you not justly condemn the man who committed such an action toward you? Therefore, theft is both guilty and unjust. There are many methods of stealing. The best known, and the most daring, is theft upon the high-road; the theft committed by the armed bandit who stops the unwary traveller and demands his money or his life. Next in the category comes a class of thieves who are quite as dishonest, but whose evil doings are involved in much more mystery. These are swindlers, sharpers, pickpockets, housebreakers, in a word, the ordinary *habitués* of the house of correction. For such as these there is no cry for mercy, since they are universally rejected and contemned. And next comes a third class not so easily recognized. These are people who, under a pretence of rendering you a service, get possession of your money by schemes and calculations so cleverly concocted that they appear quite above reproach. They are charitable enough to lend you a sum of money at the modest interest of twenty, twenty-five, or fifty per cent; or they will lend you money with a show of fair dealing at only eight or ten per cent, but in a very short time, by accumulating both interest and principal, they will soon contrive to ruin you.

Usurers are the curse of workmen, small farmers, clerks, and young married men. The law discourages the practice of usury as much as possible, but it can render itself invisible, and often hides itself so well that it is impossible to prove it in order to punish it. But although the usurer may succeed in eluding human justice, he shall fall hereafter into the hands of God, who cannot be deceived.

The fourth method of stealing, with regard to which it is very easy to deceive one's self, is, for this reason, only too common, especially in large towns. A shopman sells for the first quality some

thing that he knows to be of inferior quality; he weighs, he measures, always to his own advantage; he knows how to turn the scale so cleverly that the unfortunate purchaser can perceive nothing wrong. Thus out of twelve or fifteen yards he will manage to gain about half a yard; out of fifteen or twenty pounds of merchandise, a pound or a pound and a half. This is a theft, nothing but a theft!

A cook goes to market; she bargains and buys for about three shillings the chicken or the fish for which anywhere else she must have paid at least five shillings; then she unhesitatingly enters five shillings in her book of expenditure, excusing herself by this kind of reasoning, which is unfortunately prevalent among servants: "I might have gone to the fruiterer's, and then I should have spent five shillings; if I have taken the trouble to go to market to wear out my boots, and to beat down the prices, it is quite fair that I should profit by it, and not my master and mistress." That is a theft, nothing but a theft; the interests of your master and mistress ought to be to you the same as your own, and as for the two shillings you have stolen them!

A servant asks and obtains from some purveyor five per cent upon each account; nothing could appear more legitimate. "By going to this man rather than another," the servant argues, "I enable him to gain a large sum of money every year; he recognizes, by a trifling commission, the little service that I render him; I may therefore quite conscientiously profit by this arrangement." Yes, but on the condition, rarely observed, that this commission should be upon the profit of the shopman, and not at the expense of the master, unless with his consent. And in some cases the profit is so small that it is impossible to allow the five per cent. Then what is the result? The shopman gives false weights, increases his prices, and the servant, blinded by interest, pretends not to perceive it. Nevertheless he wrongs the master who pays and employs him by allowing him to be charged unfairly. Is he, then, an honest servant?

We might add many other examples; among others we might speak of children who abstract small sums from their mother's drawer under the specious pretext that what belongs to the parents belongs to the children, of many who exact money unfairly for small services in which they have been employed; but it is impossible to say everything, and the individual conscience will supply what is wanting.

Theft is a mortal sin when it is of some importance, and this importance must be determined by the circumstances, and by the value and importance of the object stolen. Thus, to steal a few pence, or

an old coat, from a poor man might be a mortal sin. At the same time, it is quite certain that, however great the fortune of the person robbed, to steal a sum of four or five shillings would be committing a mortal sin.

If we are forbidden to steal from others, we are equally forbidden to retain stolen property.

If you perceive that you have in your possession something which belongs to me, it is quite clear that you ought to restore it to me, and that as soon as possible. This is simple justice.

To make restitution is to restore to others that which rightfully belongs to them.

We are obliged to make restitution under pain of mortal sin, in the case of an object of some value. No one is obliged, in making restitution, to inform against themselves; it is even better to avoid it. The money may be sent anonymously, or placed in the hands of the priest or some person of confidence, so that it may reach its destination safely and secretly. If it is impossible to restore to its owners what has been wrongfully taken from them, it should be given to the poor, or employed in some work of piety. But in everything of this kind there is always one practical rule to give: consult your confessor, and do exactly what he tells you.

I need not add that a man who does not pay his debts when he is able to pay them wrongs his neighbor and breaks the seventh commandment.

In this, as in everything which concerns honor, it is well to be excessively careful. This is the only case in which it may be good to be scrupulous. How much less misery, how much less crime, there would be in the world, if all men heard and faithfully kept the seventh commandment.

THEFT.

THEFT! what a sinister word! It causes the cheek to flush with shame, and the heart to swell with a sense of indescribable scorn and indignation!

To steal is to take voluntarily something that belongs to another.

To take the property of another by mistake, thinking it is our own, is not to steal but only to deceive one's self. The most honest people might make such a mistake as this. But in such a case as this there is this difference between an honest man and a thief; a thief would keep his usurped property, while an honest man would restore it directly he discovered his error

It is related of St. Eloi, minister of Dagobert, King of France, that, desiring to build a monastery, he asked of the king his master some land for this purpose. When the building was completed Eloi perceived that the architects had taken a foot of land more than Dagobert had granted. He hastened immediately to the palace, threw himself like a guilty man at the king's feet, and asked pardon for his infidelity. Surprised and touched by such noble rectitude, and such extreme tenderness of conscience, the king raised him with kindness and punished him by doubling his first donation. After Eloi had retired: "See," said the king to those who surrounded him, "how faithful and how conscientious are those who serve Jesus Christ; my governors and stewards will unscrupulously possess themselves of entire provinces, while Eloi trembles at having one inch of land which belongs to me!"

The most daring theft (of which we have, thank God, no occasion to speak here) is that violent and forcible robbery which is practised only by brigands and highwaymen. These wretched men who scale walls, break open doors and windows, and waylay travellers, only fall into such an excess of crime by forgetfulness of God, and the loss of all religion.

But that which is, alas, far more common, is the secret, hidden theft, dexterously committed, and the very guilt of which is often concealed by some specious pretext. And thus, whatever may be said to the contrary, the child steals who takes things secretly from his parents. The servant steals who, under pretence of insufficient wages, contrives to keep even the smallest amount of change out of the money given him for different purposes, or who gives away bread or wine without the permission of his master.

The workman steals who, under pretext that he is not sufficiently paid, manages to pay himself with his own hands, and to deceive his employer in a multiplicity of ways.

The shopman steals who sells at a high price goods which he knows to be of an inferior quality; or who deteriorates what he sells, wine, for instance, or milk, by mixing it with water to increase the quantity; or has recourse to certain tricks which add to the weight of different articles of commerce.

All these different methods of cheating and deceiving are very common in the world, but to be guilty of either is to sin, and sometimes to sin very grievously, according to the extent of the wrong that is done, and every one is under obligation to make reparation to their neighbor as far as that is possible. There are many other

ways of obtaining unjust possession of the property of others. The cupidity of man is so inventive! To cite a few of these different ways: It is dishonest to bring about an unjust trial; to profit by a judicial sentence that you know to be false; to lend money upon usury; to neglect any duty through cowardice or negligence, as workmen or servants do who only work when their master is watching them; to leave debts unpaid when it is possible to pay them; to withhold from servants or workmen the wages due to them; to cheat at play; to keep anything you might find, without trying to discover its owner; to break a promise; all these common failings are nothing but disguised dishonesty, and those who are addicted to such practices as these will certainly go to hell or to purgatory if they do not repair, as far as in them lies, the wrong they have done to their neighbor.

Those who have stolen must not fail to restore; this is unquestionable. "Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," says the Gospel. Thieves shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. "No restitution," cried the great bishop St. Augustine, "no restitution, no absolution." And in this the law of God is sanctioned by all human laws; in every civilized country thieves are punished and are forced to restore what they have taken, or to repair the mischief they have done.

When it is impossible to make restitution it is at least necessary to repent, and to be sincerely disposed to make restitution whenever that is possible.

It is, moreover, necessary to restore the stolen property to the person from whom it was stolen, and not to any other. There are those who believe it is sufficient to give something of equal value to the poor, but in this they entirely deceive themselves. It is to Cæsar that it is necessary to restore that which was taken from Cæsar. And mark well that this is without any distinction of riches or property, of honor or dishonor. We have no more right to take a penny from a rich man than from a poor man, for is not the penny of the rich man quite as clearly the property of another as is the penny of the poor man? If to steal from a poor man is a more serious offence than to steal from a rich man, that is only because of the extent of the wrong done, and not because it is allowable to take from the rich, even of their superfluity. Alas! how great has been the evil caused by cupidity. How many souls have been cast into hell by possessions unlawfully obtained! How many have wanted courage to repair the wrong done to their neighbor! How many have wanted

courage to acknowledge this sin of dishonesty at the tribunal of penance! And yet it is the tribunal of pardon and of mercy.

Stolen money hardens the heart. Thieves seldom repent. A miserable usurer died without the sacraments some years ago, in Normandy, for the sake of a sum of eight francs which he was not willing to restore! . . . To be eternally lost for the sake of eight francs! Is it possible to understand such madness?

Oh, let us be honest men! It is not everything to be an honest man, but it is much. Let us guard against the desire for money; let us covet something nobler and more worthy of ourselves. "Blessed," said our divine Master, "are the poor in spirit" (namely, those whose hearts are detached from the fleeting prosperity of the world), "for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

THE eighth commandment of God forbids many sins which are hurtful to our neighbor as to ourselves—lying, false witness, and calumny. We might fill a whole volume with so important and practical a subject; but a few words are better than none, and those few we will try to make both clear and simple.

To lie is to speak with an intention to deceive; it is to affirm as true what we know to be false, or as false what we know to be true, with the intention of misleading those to whom we speak. It is evident that lying is a great evil, since God is truth itself.

There are many kinds of lies; the least serious of all is that which is spoken in jest, for amusement, and to entrap some one; in such a case as this, it might be no sin if nothing serious is involved. Officious lies, being more deliberately spoken, are of greater importance; these are lies that are told to render service to others, to prevent any one from being punished, or to obtain some advantage for a friend; however charitable the intention, such lies are distinctly forbidden. No lie is allowable, under any pretext, not even to render service to others.

If you lie to excuse yourself, the cowardice or self-love which prompts you to speak falsely adds also to the gravity of your offence. It is still worse if you lie from a spirit of boasting, or worse still to injure another. Under different circumstances a lie may become a grievous sin if it relate to anything of great importance, and is accompanied by circumstances which take away all excuse. A lie may be even a sacrilege; for instance, a serious lie told in confession

But whatever may be the gravity of a lie under particular circumstances, it must always be avoided with the greatest care; he who is not faithful in small things will hardly be faithful in greater things.

False witness is a solemn lie which always includes perjury, and which is usually not only a sin but a crime. God by the mouth of St. Peter, in the Acts of the Apostles, points out to us the enormity of this sin in the tragical account of the death of Ananias and Saphira. Ananias and Saphira his wife were Jews, and had become Christians. It was in the time of the Apostles at Jerusalem; and the early Christians, filled with the Holy Spirit, and utterly detached from the things of this world, parted voluntarily with all their possessions and brought the price of them to the Apostles, to be distributed among the poor.

Ananias and Saphira, being less fervent, yet not wishing to appear less perfect than the rest, brought only a part of their fortune, affirming to the Apostle St. Peter, who solemnly questioned them, that that was all they had. "Why hast thou lied to the Holy Ghost?" said St. Peter, supernaturally enlightened by the Spirit of God. "Why hath Satan tempted thy heart? Couldst thou not keep thy possession, was it not in thy power? No one obliged you to bring it to us. Thou hast not lied to men, but to God."

And Ananias and Saphira fell, suddenly struck down, and died. If perjurers and false witnesses are not always punished thus immediately, their sin is no less serious, and they will surely feel the effects of God's justice hereafter if they do not quickly repent.

There is yet another way of violating the eighth commandment, and that is by calumny.

Calumny consists in wronging our neighbor by imputing to him some evil that he has not committed. If it is anything of serious consequence, calumny is a mortal sin. But it need hardly be said that for calumny to be a sin there must be an evil intention, and a clear knowledge of the falsehood asserted; otherwise it would be simply error or slander. A calumniator is necessarily a liar who lies with the intention of destroying the character of his neighbor. When we have had the misfortune to commit this sin, and thus to take away any one's reputation, we are bound by conscience to repair, as much as possible, the evil we have done. In this respect, just as with theft, reparation is a rigorous duty, and one of the essential conditions of true repentance and of that pardon which we ask from God. It is necessary to be most scrupulous in speaking of others; there are few conversations in which calumny does not play

a principal part, and, whatever palliations may be urged, such conversations are no less sinful and dangerous. He who would be horrified at the thought of stabbing his neighbor with a knife, stabs him pitilessly and remorselessly with his tongue. Let us therefore consider our words. Let us be neither inconsiderate, nor chattering, nor mischief-making. Let us be, on the contrary, guarded in speech, and merciful in judgment. Let us love the truth, and thus show our love to Our Lord, who has said of Himself, "I am the Truth." Let us be straightforward and sincere; when we have been mistaken let us always have the courage to recognize our fault, and, if questioned, to acknowledge our liability to error. He who thus humbles himself shall be exalted both before men and before God. Let us never tell a lie for any consideration whatever, but ever cultivate an especial reverence toward the eighth commandment of God: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

If the sixth commandment forbids every act that is contrary to purity, the ninth goes still further, and forbids every thought and desire contrary to this virtue. An evil thought, a sinful desire, are grievous sins when they are entirely voluntary. When they are not voluntary, they are not sins, but temptations. The devil, who from the time of the fall has exercised over us his disastrous influence, endeavors by every means to shake our will, and to turn it away from the obedience it owes to God.

In order to tempt us he first makes use of our imagination, and, at the moment when we are least prepared, torments us by evil thoughts which he knows how to render seductive. He has also power to present to the mind a terrible imagery by which he hopes to entice the soul into his snares. Fable relates how ancient navigators sometimes encountered in the midst of the seas strange beings called sirens, half-women and half-serpents, whose beautiful faces and exquisite voices so charmed those who were imprudent enough to wait and listen to them, that the unfortunate men, fascinated and bewildered, allowed themselves to fall into the water, where the sirens devoured them.

Satan makes fact of this old fable every day by tempting and destroying many victims. He casts a perfidious and alluring disguise over the evil he desires us to commit. Do not listen to him; he is a traitor He lies and he deceives us. Happiness is not, cannot be,

obtained by the means that he points out. It is death and not life that he offers us.

The greatest saints, as well as we, have had their fierce temptations. They have repulsed them with invincible energy, and their holiness has been augmented in the combat. St. Francis of Sales, the great and admirable bishop of Geneva, who died without ever having committed a mortal sin, acknowledged to one of his intimate friends that chastity and meekness had been the Christian virtues which had demanded from him the greatest vigilance. St. Catherine of Siena, who was an angel of holiness and innocence, who passed a part of her life in ecstasy, was once so rudely attacked by the devil that for two months she had no respite; after this frightful temptation, which she had courageously resisted, Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared visibly before her, and as St. Catherine, prostrating herself at His feet, thanked Him humbly for her deliverance, and said to Him, "O my Saviour, where wast Thou during all this tempest?" Jesus answered her with tenderness, "My daughter, I was in thy heart, and thou hast never been nearer to Me."

If the saints have been tempted thus, it is not strange that we should be tempted too. Let us imitate their firmness, and when Satan knocks at the door of our heart, we must be careful never to open it to him; we should not even be too much disturbed by the noise he makes at the door We must say to him clearly and without hesitation, *Vade retro Satana:* "I know thee, and thou shalt not deceive me. I belong to God in this world, and forever." One of the best means of weakening temptations is to utterly despise them. It is better to pay no attention to them, but, as soon as you are conscious of them, to try to distract the mind by some occupation, and by turning the thoughts to some entirely different subject. If the attack continue, let us then pray, employ the best means in our power and have recourse to the Blessed Virgin, the Queen of angels and the special protectress of purity. Let us make with reverence the sign of the Cross, so dreaded by the devil, and most carefully avoid everything that could awake or develop the temptation. But I repeat that there is no sin in thoughts which are not voluntary; that is to say, provoked or freely accepted by the will; let us then keep our hearts and minds innocent and pure even when assailed by fierce temptation. In whatever state we may be, let us guard the treasure of Christian chastity. Let young men follow the holy example of St. Louis of Gonzaque, of St. Stanislaus of Kostka, and of so many other pure and virtuous young men. Let young girls walk

in the steps of that innumerable crowd of Christian virgins who, under the protection of the Virgin of virgins, Mary, the immaculate Mother of God, form, both on earth and in heaven, the long retinue of the Lamb without spot.

Let husbands and wives always remember the sanctity of marriage, mutually respect each other, and, in imitation of Sara and young Tobias, sanctify their love by the holy love of God; and let them by constant prayer call down the blessing of God upon their union.

How great and important a reformation would be effected in society; how far greater would be the peace and happiness of many homes, if this commandment were but faithfully observed!

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

THERE are many kinds of evil desires. After having declared by the ninth commandment that all unlawful desires of the flesh are guilty and forbidden, God gives us a tenth and last commandment to proscribe all unlawful desires for the property of others.

I say "unlawful desires," since it is not the desire for our neighbor's possessions that is forbidden, but simply the unjust desire; it is no sin to wish for something that belongs to another, but only to do so in an unlawful manner. For instance, it is not in the least forbidden that I, a poor workman, or the poor mother of a family, should desire comforts like those which my neighbor enjoys, who is even able to bring up her little family with ease. But I am forbidden to desire the possession of this fortune by unjust or injurious means. When I see my comrade wearing a good coat, very thick and quite new, while I, poor fellow, have nothing on my back but a threadbare waistcoat, or a ragged shirt, I may, in all conscience, give a heavy sigh, and say to myself, "When shall I be dressed as warmly and as comfortably as that?" When I see a grand carriage pass, is it not quite lawful and natural that I should cast a piteous glance upon the old umbrella and the worn-out shoes which are my sole protection from the rain and the mud?

Such desires as these are not in themselves unjust or guilty; but they are always useless and may easily become dangerous. Am I any the richer for having wished I were not poor? Have I a good coat upon my back because I have sighed to possess one? All these desires will bring fortune to no one, and the truly wise man should abstain from them, because, far from rendering him happier, they do but embitter those privations from which he already suffers.

Still more, these desires may become dangerous, and even guilty. If we think much of our neighbor's goods, desiring to possess them honestly, we may unconsciously go farther and desire to possess by some unlawful means, even by cheating or by violence. These evil sentiments of envy and jealousy are nothing less than a direct violation of the tenth commandment; and it is to these that I desire to call your attention.

There is in our nature an instinctive leaning toward pleasure and enjoyment, and when we suffer privation, we are only too ready to feel irritated and indignant at the prosperity of others. Hence arise hatred and antipathy, and often even criminal actions; many thefts and assassinations have originated solely in this subtle sentiment of envy, in this despicable jealousy which leads us to cast covetous glances on our neighbor's goods, upon his coat and his field, his horses and his house.

And hence arises Socialism, which is essentially a doctrine of envy and rage, a programme of the unjust anger of him who has nothing against him who has much, or, rather, of him who has less against him who has more.

It is difficult to say how fatal this passion proves to those who are once overcome by it. To begin with, it renders them miserable because it causes them to suffer, not from their own troubles alone, but from the good fortune of their neighbors, their friends, and their relations. And next, it constantly paralyzes and unfits them for work, by bringing ever before them the thought of riches which they will never obtain and by making them averse to everything which is opposed to that smooth and prosperous life which is the object of their envy.

How much happier men would be, how great the social improvement, even from a worldly point of view, if all would listen to the peaceful, beneficent voice of religion! Faith permits them, we have said, to desire a happier existence; she even makes a duty of work and of honest endeavor, without which it were impossible for the workman to rise from the depths of poverty to a life of comparative comfort and ease; but, more than all, she consoles them in the midst of their troubles, and, penetrating to the depths of the heart, plants there the seeds of hope and joy. Religion repeats to them those sweet words which fell long ago from the sacred lips of her divine Founder: "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to

your souls. For My yoke is sweet and My burden light." She points them to heaven, to an eternal joy, an unmingled happiness, a perfect repose.

Behold what awaits you if you are faithful during your probation, and if, following the example of your Master, you bear your cross with patience day by day!

Set your supreme affections on the things above, and not on the things of earth; and if sometimes the prosperity of others excite you to desire what, in your case, God has been pleased to withhold, let these desires never be unjust; let them never infringe upon the tenth and last of the divine commandments.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

THERE are six commandments of the Church, namely: I. To rest from servile work, and to hear Mass on all Sundays and Holy-days of Obligation.

II. To fast and abstain on the days commanded. These embrace Lent, the Ember Days, Fridays in Advent, the eves of certain festivals; and abstention from flesh-meat on Fridays and other appointed days of abstinence.

III. To confess our sins at least once a year.

IV. To receive worthily the Blessed Eucharist at Easter or within the time appointed.

V. To contribute to the support of our pastors.

VI. Not to marry within forbidden degrees of kindred, nor to solemnize marriage within forbidden times.

These commandments are obligatory on all Catholics, as the Church has power from her Founder, Jesus Christ, to give commandments, He having empowered her to guide and govern the faithful in His name. Having their origin in Christ, therefore, they bind all Catholics to submission and fidelity.

FIRST COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.

To rest from servile work, and to hear Mass on all Sundays and Holy-days of Obligation.

Besides the fifty-two Sundays of the year, the Church commands us, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to sanctify certain days which we call Feasts, and which are intended to recall to the memory of Christians the principal mysteries in the life of the Saviour and of

His Blessed Mother, the triumphs of the martyrs, and the heroic virtues of the Saints. These Feasts are of two kinds: the first, called Feasts of Obligation, impose upon the faithful the obligation of resting from manual labor and assisting at Mass; the others, called Feasts of Devotion, do not necessitate rest from work nor attendance at Mass under pain of sin, but it is right to celebrate them by public prayer, in order to derive from them the spiritual advantages which the Church proposed in their institution. There are in the United States six Holy-days of Obligation, viz., the Circumcision of Our Lord, the Immaculate Conception, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, All-Saints, Christmas Day, and Ascension Day. There are other great Feasts which are religiously observed, such as Easter, Pentecost, etc., but as these always fall on Sunday it is not necessary to command that they should be kept holy. As the establishment of these Feasts is entirely a matter of ecclesiastical discipline, their number may be increased or diminished, according to the judgment of the Sovereign Pontiffs. The first commandment of the Church obliges us, therefore, to sanctify these eight feasts by resting from servile work: to disobey the Church of God in an affair of such importance would be a mortal sin, and the Christian who ventures to infringe this command could only be excused by a truly sufficient reason.

By the second general commandment the Church points out to us the principal duty which must serve as the foundation of this salutary sanctification. This duty is the assistance at the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass, in which Our Lord Jesus Christ deigns to descend into our midst beneath the veils of the Holy Sacrament, and thus to render present to His Church even unto the end of the world the one great Sacrifice of our Redemption. The Mass being the central act of the worship of God upon earth, it is quite natural that the Church should have chosen it as the principal means by which Sundays and Feasts must alike be sanctified.

In order to fulfil this precept, it is also necessary to hear Mass with reverence and attention, from the beginning to the end. Those who through negligence enter the Church after the Gospel do not obey the commandment.

The assistance at Mass every Sunday is the reunion of the great Christian family; by it they are enabled to render to God the public worship of adoration, thanksgiving, and prayer, which is due to Him; to remember without ceasing that they are all the children of one father, the members of one body, the faithful of one Church, the

soldiers of one army, and the lambs of one fold. It may be affirmed that for the workman especially, who is employed during the whole week in manual labor, the sanctification of the Sunday is the practical summing up of his religious duties; and in order to judge of the moral state of a population, it is sufficient to remark in what way the first and second commandments are observed.

SECOND COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.

To fast and abstain on the days commanded.

To fast is to deprive ourselves of a portion of our usual food, and to be contented with one meal during the day and a light collation intended to render this penitential practice less difficult.

Fasting is truly a divine institution. From the commencement of the world it has been the first and most important of penitential works, and has been practised and sanctified by patriarchs and prophets, by Our Lord and His Apostles, by the martyrs and all the Saints. Its object is to humiliate the flesh and to subdue the passions, but not to injure the strength of the body.

The Church, in imitation of her divine Master, and by command of the Apostles, has chosen fasting as the means by which her children shall practise Christian penance; all are bound to fast (who have reached the age of twenty-one) during the forty days which precede Easter Sunday, on the Vigils of great Feasts, and at those four seasons of the year called Ember Days, which introduce into each of the four seasons three days of penance and sanctification. The particular observances of fasting vary in different countries and dioceses. As this holy practice is as much a work of obedience as of mortification, the only general rule which can be given is that all must observe it as directed by the Bishop of the diocese in which they live, or, in case of doubt, the confessor or pastor must be consulted. The spirit is ever the same, though the details vary.

No one is obliged to fast before the age of twenty-one, because, until then, the constitution is not completely developed, and insufficient food might affect the health. The reasons which exempt from fasting are: 1st, physical weakness or sickness; 2d, poverty, which prevents a man from being able to choose his food, and obliges him to eat just what he can procure, whenever he can procure it; 3d, the moral impossibility which arises from hard and difficult work, from extreme fatigue; and lastly, from other circumstances, of which the confessor is the only good judge,—and in fact all these reasons must,

for greater safety, be submitted to him. The gravity of any infraction of this commandment arises especially from the disobedience it involves to a public and most important regulation of the Church of God. It is to despise the public penance of the Church, and to despise the evangelical precept, "Except ye do penance ye shall all likewise perish!"

Sunday is never a fasting day, because it is the Lord's Day; this is why Lent, which includes six Sundays, begins forty-six days before Easter instead of forty. The Vigils upon which fasting is commanded are the Eves of Whit-Sunday, of St. Peter and St. Paul, of the Assumption, All Saints, and Christmas Day. The obligation of abstaining from flesh meat on Fridays is also a very important religious law, and is similarly distinguished by the character of a public and general penance. We sanctify the week and prepare ourselves for Sunday by this bodily mortification in remembrance of the passion of Our Lord. Any violation of the law of abstinence is also a mortal sin.

And if any one should say, "That which enters into the body cannot defile the soul," or, "God does not regard the food we eat," let them, I say, clearly understand that this has nothing whatever to do with it; it is not a question of eating meat, but wholly one of obedience. However indifferent God may be as to our choice of food, He is far from indifferent as to our dispositions of obedience or rebellion; and He has not only given us a general command to do penance, but has also commanded us to obey the Church in all the regulations she may make with regard to this holy and necessary practice. The reasons required for an exemption from the law of abstinence are the same as for a dispensation from fasting. But upon this point let no one deceive themselves, it is impossible to deceive God; we should always consult the confessor who is charged with our spiritual welfare, and should also remember that it is a mortal sin not to abstain except for a truly sufficient reason.

Let the indifferent, the sinful, and the incredulous all regard us with contempt, as men who follow shadows and are weakly intent upon trifles. Is it a trifle to obey God and His Church? Is it weakness to honor the words spoken by Jesus Christ to the pastors of His Church?—"Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature; HE THAT HEARETH YOU HEARETH ME, AND HE THAT DESPISETH YOU DESPISETH ME!"

LENT.

Ah! this is quite a melancholy subject, and you would prefer that it should not be forced upon your attention. It is unpleasant enough when Lent comes, and in the mean time the less said about it the better. Ever unwelcome is this holy season, and all, with the exception of a few fervent Christians, appear to regard the forty days with a feeling of vexation which almost amounts to resentment.

But with our forefathers it was not so. Full of faith, they drew from their firm belief powerful motives for energy, perseverance, and good will. They rightly estimated duty; they recognized its grandeur; and they placed the sacred laws of God and of His Church far above the vain pretexts to which our self-indulgence so often sacrifices them.

Our forefathers observed in every detail the commands of the Church with regard to fasting and abstinence; every one abstained on Fridays and Saturdays. Men did not study themselves and pamper themselves as they do now; this may be proved by the fact that at Paris in the fifteenth century, in spite of a population of hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, only one butcher sold meat during Lent, and supplied all that was required by killing a single ox a day. They fasted the whole of Lent, and no one died from the effects. Neither did they suffer, for populations were far more flourishing, and men taller and stronger than now. "But can it be," you say, "that God requires bodily mortification instead of heartfelt repentance?" To which we answer simply that God requires both, because heartfelt repentance is ever united to bodily mortification. The soul influences the body, and the body reacts upon the soul, because of their intimate union; a body that is indulged will sooner or later impart its own feebleness to the soul, its constant companion; and a soul pure and upright, and victorious over its passions, will necessarily hold the soul in perfect discipline and subjection. The body, from the fatal results of original sin, is in constant rebellion against the soul; and the soul must therefore treat it almost as an enemy, and be ever on its guard against it, in order to insure its own independence, its fidelity to God, and its eternal salvation.

"But why should such a disagreeable means of doing penance be chosen?" And why should it not be chosen? The Church has chosen it—1st. Because it is sufficiently disagreeable to constitute a penance, and not too hard to be practised by all Christians. 2d. Out of rever

ence for the Apostles, who instituted Lent. 3d. Because such is her will, and we must all, without any exception, respect her choice and submit to her commandment.

To obey the laws of the Church is to obey Jesus Christ; to violate her laws is to neglect them, to regard them as trifles,—is to despise, to neglect, and to disobey Jesus Christ. Is this a little fault?

"I desire to obey God rather than men, and the Pope and the Bishops are men." Yes, but men vested with divine authority, so that it is God Himself who speaks, commands, instructs, sanctifies, forbids, and governs by the lips of those whom He has sent.

"And shall God condemn me for a little meat?" No; but for the disobedience, which is all the more guilty in proportion as the law imposed is simple and easy to fulfil. Is it not utter folly to offend God for such a little thing? A man who could have fasted and abstained, yet would not, shall stand without excuse before the tribunal of his God.

"But I cannot fast or abstain; it makes me ill." Is that quite true? Remember that it is God who must judge. If your health is really too weak, the law is not for you; the Church desires to make us do penance, and not to make us ill; she desires to deprive us of superfluous, but not of necessary, food; but, as regards what is necessary make no mistake; consult your doctor, and still more your confessor; he is the doctor of the divine law, and is gifted with grace to make it clear.

Those who have very hard work, or are extremely poor, may always obtain a dispensation, since no one can live without sufficient food.

"But it is exceedingly tiresome and disagreeable to fast!"

And this last and most feeble excuse is generally at the root of the whole matter, and should be urged first instead of last. "It is unpleasant to fulfil my duty, and therefore I will not fulfil it." Be it so; but I warn you; make ready to travel on the road to hell, for your face is turned in that direction. Whoever fails to fulfil his duty lives in sin; and he who lives in sin shall receive, as an inevitable consequence, that eternal punishment of which Our Lord speaks so often in the Gospel, warning us to avoid at any price its inconceivable pain!

For my own part, I find it less difficult to keep the Lenten fast year after year, and to abstain on Friday, than to suffer forever in hell.

Every one is free to choose.

THE THIRD AND FOURTH COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

THIRD COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.—*To confess our sins at least once a year.*

FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF THE CHURCH.—*To receive worthily the Blessed Eucharist at Easter, or within the time appointed.*

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST instituted confession in order to make repentance easier for our weak human nature, and to assure us of the pardon of our sins. He laid down no rule as to the times and seasons at which sinners might have recourse to this sacrament of mercy; it was to be an ever-open and inexhaustible source from which we might incessantly obtain not only pardon, but peace of heart and purity of conscience.

In the first century of the Church, Christians had recourse to the sacrament of penance only when they had committed some serious fault, and not at fixed and periodical times. The early Christians had few grievous falls with which to reproach themselves: they prayed constantly, kept the days of fasting and abstinence and all holy vigils with the utmost care and devotion, meditated incessantly on the Word of God, and went to Communion every day. It may be easily understood that, to those who lived such lives, confession was not as necessary as to the tepid Christians of the present day.

But, when the barbarous nations in great numbers received the light of faith, certain negligences gradually crept into the practices of religion, resulting from the ignorance of these new children of the Church, and from the uncultured condition of their consciences. This reached to such an extent that, in some countries, the service of God was so greatly neglected that people lived almost without the sacraments, or at least allowed long periods of time to pass without receiving them. In order to remedy this abuse, Pope Innocent III., at the General Lateran Council, held at Rome in 1215, decreed that henceforth all Christians having reached the age of reason should be bound, under pain of mortal sin, of grave disobedience, and excommunication, to present themselves to the priest and confess their sins at least once a year. Those who should dare to disobey this commandment should be excluded from the great Catholic family, deprived of the public prayers and of permission to assist at the sacred offices of the Church, and, finally, if they persevered in this state until death, should be denied Christian burial. The Lateran Council

did not, as has been falsely asserted, invent confession, but simply laid down a rule with regard to it, by commanding that all should confess at least once a year.

The time of the year at which this precept must be fulfilled has never been determined; but as confession is the natural preparation for the Easter Communion, the Paschal season is that generally chosen.

We will not add anything here to defend confession against the calumny and blasphemy of those who need it most, besides the fact that there is not one out of a hundred who believes a word of all these foolish accusations. We are now only speaking of confession as commanded by the Church, and believe that sufficient has been said to make the nature and bearing of the Fourth Commandment clear.

The Lateran Council next laid down a law with regard to the sacrament of Holy Eucharist. It commanded that every Christian who had made his first communion should receive the blessed sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts.

The Easter Communion is not only a work of piety; it is, besides, a kind of public protestation of the Catholic faith. The Church calls all her children to the foot of her holy altars; she invites them to the divine banquet of the Eucharist, and fixes upon the festival of Easter for this great reunion. Whoever fails wilfully to answer to her call, excludes himself from the Christian family, and excommunicates himself. He participates no longer in the spiritual possessions and benedictions of the Church, and, as a heathen, he is buried if he persevere in this voluntary excommunication.

It is a grievous sin not to fulfil the Easter duties; it is an open separation from the Church of God. If you had been so unhappy as to fail in such an important duty, you would be bound to repent without delay; to prepare yourself, by sincere contrition and a fervent confession, to atone for your negligence and to approach worthily to the sacrament of Holy Eucharist. Even if the Paschal season should be past, you would still be under the obligation to communicate "at least once a year," and in such a case we can only apply the popular dictum, "Better late than never."

Because the Church commands us to communicate at least once a year, some have illogically concluded that it is not necessary to communicate more often. This is a great error, and shows an utter ignorance of the things of God. The Easter Communion is chiefly a Catholic manifestation; the other communions which we make during the year have not this character; their principal object is to fortify us against the attacks of the devil, and to strengthen within

us that life of grace which is the sanctifying union of our souls with our Creator and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Every Christian who seriously desires to labor for his own eternal salvation approaches often to the Holy Communion, not only to obey the command of the Church, but to co-operate in the merciful designs of God, who gives Himself to us in the Blessed Sacrament, and sustains us thus in Christian holiness throughout our earthly pilgrimage.

The time assigned for the Easter Communion in the United States extends from the first Sunday after Ash-Wednesday to Trinity Sunday, unless it be otherwise ordered. At what age children should go to Confession and Communion must be left to the decision of their pastors. It is recommended, as a rule, to go to Confession, and, with the permission of the pastor, to Holy Communion at least once a month.

THE EASTER COMMUNION.

We shall not speak here of the real presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. We have already discussed this great subject. But if ever a doubt with regard to it should arise in our minds, let it be sufficient for us to remember that the Son of God Himself has said, "He who believeth in Me hath everlasting life." "Take and eat; THIS IS MY BODY. Drink ye all of this; THIS IS MY BLOOD." These words alone are sufficient to disperse every shadow of doubt. But why does Jesus Christ come thus in the Holy Eucharist? Why does He descend upon our altars? Why does He travel thus divinely from heaven to earth? For one reason only. The Son of God, Our Saviour, comes to take possession of a sanctuary—of a temple, a thousand times more beautiful, a thousand times more worthy of Him, than the Temple at Jerusalem. And what can this temple be? It is your heart—your soul. Such is the temple that God has chosen. It is there He desires to descend; it is there that He loves to repose. What value after all, in His most holy sight, have those tabernacles and sacred vases in which He is sheltered by our faith and love? He is the living God; and these temples, these ciboriums, these altars—what are they but metal and stone? What He desires is a temple, living even as He lives, capable of being enlightened with His light, which is the spiritual and invisible light of truth, capable of being enkindled with the sacred flame, which is no visible fire, but the spiritual and immaterial fire of love. Such are the worshippers that God desires, worshippers in spirit and in truth, as He has said in the holy Gospel; therefore reasonable creatures, capa-

ble of knowing and loving Him and of entering into participation with His divine life.

Jesus Christ comes, therefore, in the Holy Eucharist to make our souls and bodies the living sanctuaries of God. But in order to correspond to this inestimable benefit there are, on our part, two things necessary: 1st. We must communicate; 2d. We must communicate well.

1st. We must communicate. Without this the design of God is made of no effect. It is for us that our dear Lord is present there; it is not for Himself, for He has need of nothing, and is infinitely happy; but it is out of pure mercy and compassion for us.

There is also the obligation under pain of mortal sin to communicate at least once a year, and that at Easter. This is what we call our Easter duties; and just as the festival of the Pasch formerly united the Jews of one common family year by year at the same religious banquet, even so among Christians, who are the true people of God, the great Paschal solemnity, in which the Church celebrates the mysteries of the passion, death, and triumphant resurrection of the Saviour, should gather together all the members of the Catholic family around the sacred banquet of the Holy Eucharist.

Therefore whoever fails to fulfil his Easter duties commits a grievous sin; and, if he persevere in this state of spiritual death, runs a great risk of losing the faith, or falling into hardness of heart and final impenitence, and, lastly, of becoming, throughout all eternity, the prey of the second death, by being forever separated from God in the terrible flames of hell.

2d. It is also necessary to communicate well.

To communicate well is to receive Jesus Christ present in the Holy Eucharist, with a pure conscience, a sincere desire, and a firm resolution of being henceforth faithful to God, by the assistance of His grace.

To make a bad communion is to receive the Blessed Sacrament into a soul defiled with mortal sin, and without the firm resolve of being for the future God's true and faithful servant.

To make a good communion is to perform the holiest actions and the greatest of all the good works possible to man in this world. To make a bad communion is the greatest sin by which man can offend his Saviour and his God. To make a good communion is to receive joy and consolation, peace of heart and conscience, the warrant of final perseverance and of everlasting life. To make a bad communion is to draw down upon one's self both judgment and condemnation, to sign with one's own hand the sentence of eternal woe: to

renew the crime of Judas, and to provoke the malediction of the sacrilegious.

Therefore go to communion, but communicate well. You are placed between three alternatives: 1st, to make a good communion; 2d, to make a bad communion; 3d, not to go to communion at all.

And to make a bad communion is almost the same as not to communicate at all, for it is to kill the soul. To die because we do not eat is almost the same thing as to die because we have swallowed poison. The result is the same—death.

Of these three roads two lead to hell, one only leads to heaven. Therefore choose. Communicate at Easter; but, in order rightly to fufill this great and holy duty, prepare yourself by prayer, by spiritual reading, and by good works, as far as you are able. Go to confession some time before, especially if you are of the number of those who have delayed. Do all you can, and God will supply the rest "Peace to men of good will."

When you leave the holy altar after having fulfilled your Christian duty you will be perfectly happy, and your soul will be at peace! "Oh! if I had only known how simple it was, and how happy it makes you," said a poor workman who had stayed away from the sacraments for twenty-nine years, "I would never have waited so long."

THE FIFTH AND SIXTH COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

By the Fifth Commandment the Church obliges us to contribute willingly, according to our means, to the support of our pastors, churches, Catholic schools, and religious institutions.

The Sixth Commandment prohibits marriage within the forbidden degree of kindred, or to solemnize marriage with those having canonical impediments, with Protestants, or within the forbidden times. (*This commandment is fully explained under the "Sacrament of Matrimony," page 139.*)

THE ENIGMA OF LIFE.

THERE is a very strange thing in this world, or rather the world itself is a very strange thing. On the one hand we are certain, absolutely certain, that God is infinitely good, infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful; it is no less certain that it is He who created the

world, that without Him nothing exists, and that in His infinite goodness He destines all creatures to be happy; how is it, then, that there is so much misery in life? Whence come so many griefs, so many disappointments, so much suffering of body and soul? How is it possible to explain, without reflecting on the sovereign goodness and wisdom of the Creator, the destruction, pestilence, and disease which ravage our provinces, the inundations which desolate country and town, the storms and tempests which bring ruin to so many homes? And, more than all, how can we explain that terrible and inevitable phenomenon which we call death, and which is so repugnant to the deepest instincts of our nature that the best and holiest of men tremble at its approach, although they know that it opens to them the gates of a blessed eternity? Such is the enigma of which the Christian faith alone can give the solution. It teaches us that God is infinite goodness, eternal life, and perfect order. Nothing evil, nothing disordered, can be the work of His hands. "He has not made death," as He Himself declares in the Holy Scriptures; "life cannot engender death." But from the beginning of the world a twofold revolt, in heaven and on earth, has destroyed the order established by God in all things; and this revolt, which we call sin, is the only cause of the evils which afflict us. This fatal rebellion, begun in heaven, continues upon earth. The most powerful of God's angels, the highest in the heavenly habitations, Lucifer or Satan, refused to render the adoration which God required, and was joined in his rebellion by a number of the heavenly host. They were all cast down from heaven, and on the earth Satan tempts the fidelity of man, and seeks to associate him in his own revolt and in his own damnation.

Adam, our first parent, was indeed created in innocence and happiness; the faithful angels were ever with him in his earthly paradise, and guarded him incessantly from the fatal influences of Satan; but notwithstanding this aid, and in the midst of this happiness, Adam remained free to correspond to the love of God, or, on the contrary, to turn away from Him. He succumbed to temptation, transgressed the simple commandment which God had given him, and, by this adhesion to the disobedience of the devil, made his submission to Satan, not only for himself, but for all the human race which should hereafter spring from him.

Hence all our sorrows, and hence all the evils of life. "Thou shalt die," God said to him; "cursed is the earth to thy work; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat

the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread till thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return."

Such is the penalty of sin; such is the sentence of divine justice; such is the secret of the sufferings and woes of humanity. We have been delivered into the power of the devil, who afflicts us, and we should have no heritage but despair, if the mercy of God, which is infinite as His justice, had not given us a Saviour.

This Saviour is Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who, by His incarnation in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has taken our nature upon Him, and has loved us so much that He has offered Himself to the justice of His Father as the one holy and all-sufficient victim for the rebellion of men. He suffered and died for us, and merited by the sacrifice of the Cross the pardon of our sins; He has opened to us once more the heaven from which we were excluded, and has instituted upon earth a Church and sacraments by means of which it is easy for every man to be reconciled to God and live a holy life. Jesus came to restore to us eternal life, but each one of us must gain it for himself by triumphing in his own person over that enemy whom Jesus conquered first.

Each one of us, in imitation of his Divine Master, must live united to God by obedience and love, and must patiently endure the trials which are so thickly sprinkled over the path of life.

And thus the Christian, though subject like other men to bodily suffering, to sickness, and to all the evils which result from the fatal power of the devil upon earth, is lifted by his union with Jesus Christ far out of the reach of his enemy. The terrible darts of Satan, instead of overwhelming the Christian, turn to his glory by giving him day by day new opportunities of conquest. Poverty, suffering, death itself are all transfigured for the disciple of Jesus Christ, and sometimes even the generosity of his love is such that he even welcomes and desires them, in order that he may more perfectly resemble his Saviour.

Such is the solution, too much ignored, alas! in the present day, of all the evils to which we are subject in the journey of life. Happy the faithful Christian to whom this difficult enigma is revealed, and who in the midst of trials has perfect trust in the divine love and fatherly care which watches over all!

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS.

In the fourteenth century there lived at Cologne a celebrated preacher named Jean Tauler. He was renowned for his learning and his charity. One day he entered a church, and kneeling down prayed earnestly to God that He would make known to him the way in which he might serve Him best. When his prayer was ended, he went out from the church; at the door, crouching on one of the steps, was a poor man scantily covered with rags, and so disfigured that every one who saw him was moved to pity; he had lost one arm and a leg, and his face and his whole body were covered with frightful wounds. Touched with compassion, Tauler approached him, and, taking some money from his purse, said to the poor man, "Good day, my dear friend." "Thank you, sir," he replied; "but I have never had a bad day."

Tauler believed that the unfortunate man had misunderstood him: "I wish you a good day," he repeated; "I wish that you may be happy, and have all that you desire." "I quite understand," replied the beggar, "and I thank you for your charity, good master; but your wishes were fulfilled for me long ago." The poor fellow has lost his reason, thought Jean Tauler, or perhaps he is deaf; and, raising his voice, he cried, "You do not understand me; I wish you to be happy." "Ah, do not be angry, dear master," replied the poor man; "I understand you very well, and I tell you again that I am very happy, that I have all I desire, and that all my days are good and happy days."

For an instant Jean Tauler thought he was mad, but there was a tone in his voice which struck him. Therefore he went nearer to him, sat down by his side, and asked him to explain what he meant.

"O God!" exclaimed the poor man earnestly, "it is very simple. I have known from my childhood that God is wise and just and good; from my childhood I have suffered; I have been attacked by a terrible disease, so that my body has wasted away; I have always been poor. . . . I have said to myself: Nothing happens but by the will or the permission of God. And God knows better than I do what is good for me. He loves me as a father loves his child. . . . Therefore I am sure that these sufferings are for my greater good. I have also accustomed myself never to will anything but what our dear Lord wills; if He sends me sickness, I welcome it as a friend; if He gives me health, I receive it with joy: if I have nothing to eat, I fast

gladly to expiate my sins and those of others; if I have not enough to clothe myself, I think of my Saviour naked in the crib and on the Cross, and I find I am richer far than He; if I suffer on earth, I shall be happier for all eternity. . . . What shall I say to you? I am always contented: if I look miserable, I have a very light heart: I will all that God wills, and nothing that He does not will; I desire nothing but to do His holy will. So you see now, dear master, that I am very happy, that all my days are good days, and that I have all that I desire."

Jean Tauler wept in silence. He had never heard so beautiful a sermon; he gave the poor man his cloak and the only piece of silver he had in his purse, and in spite of the wounds on his face he embraced him with joy. Then he returned to the church, thanking God for having shown him the most perfect way of serving Him.

From that time he became, as far as he could, the disciple and imitator of that poor saint, and he was accustomed to say when reciting this touching adventure: "Happiness is possible in all conditions; for the poor as well as for the rich; for him who suffers as for him who is in health. Happiness is in the heart, and nowhere else; it depends upon our disposition, and not upon our position in life. Do the will of God, and you will be happy, whatever the outward circumstances by which you are surrounded."

PLEASURE AND HAPPINESS.

THERE is no error which is more pernicious or more prevalent in the present day than the confusion of these two ideas, pleasure and happiness.

Pleasure is the satisfaction of the senses. Happiness is the satisfaction of the heart. Pleasure is material, and is even more or less sensual; happiness is of a wholly different nature, it dwells within the soul, and raises man above matter!

There is as much difference and disproportion between pleasure and happiness, as between the body and the soul; and to confuse these two ideas is to fall into an ignoble and deplorable materialism. Pleasure is the happiness of the beast, of the animal which has no soul, which has only outward instincts, and lives only through the senses.

Man is, it is true, susceptible to pleasure, since he has a body with its senses; but his vocation lifts him infinitely higher. He has a reasonable soul, capable of knowing the truth, of loving and desir-

ing the good; he lives on earth only that he may go to heaven, where perfect happiness shall be his everlasting heritage. Therefore our happiness consists, first upon earth, and afterward in heaven, in the complete repose and full satisfaction of all the faculties of the soul.

And if in this world so few are happy, it is because so few seek happiness there where alone it may be found. The greater part believe that they obtain happiness in the satisfaction of their senses, and the desires of their lower passions, thus confusing pleasure with happiness. In youth especially this error is almost universal, and nothing but the marvellous teaching of the Catholic faith can provide the young with a remedy against this dangerous temptation, and with efficacious means by which they may resist it.

The profligate seeks happiness in the full indulgence of his lower nature, and, finding nothing but a sinful pleasure, feels ever in his heart a void—an unknown and unsatisfied need—which is nothing but the need of that happiness he cannot obtain.

The ambitious man imagines that he will gain happiness if he can only make a name in the world, and rise to a high position, and become a leader among men. For this he labors and lives, and in nine cases out of ten he falls far short of success, since worldly honors are somewhat difficult of attainment; and even when, having distanced a host of competitors, he reaches the goal for which he has striven, he finds greatness but a vain delusion, and that pinnacle to which his pride has raised him an utter weariness and a bitter disappointment—and why? Because happiness is not there, and the true needs of the soul are still unsatisfied.

With the miser it is the same. How many men are misers without being conscious of it? Avarice, indeed, does not solely consist in amassing gold and silver, it consists more especially in an engrossing attachment to gold and silver; it is the worship of money, of riches; and this religion has many devotees. These are they who, whatever their calling, put riches in the place of happiness, and, in order to satisfy the heart, endeavor to fill the purse! But they labor in vain; they heap money in vain; the heart cannot, like the purse, be filled with sovereigns. Where, then, is happiness? And how shall we enter into the designs of the great and merciful God who created us to be happy? By leading a pure and Christian life on earth, and thus preparing ourselves for that blessed and eternal rest in which the soul, united to the risen and glorified body, shall enjoy the perfect possession of its last end, even God Himself. Christians alone know here below the sort of true happiness, that happiness

which no power on earth can take from them, and which is independent of the vicissitudes of life. God alone, for whom, and in whom, Christians live, can satisfy the deep need of the soul; He alone reserves for Himself, as an inaccessible domain, the depth of the hearts He has created for His glory.

Therefore, if we desire to be happy on earth and in heaven, let us serve Him faithfully, and avoid sin, which is ever the harbinger of misfortune. Let us labor, without ceasing, to fulfil the holy law of God, and thus shall we surely attain the perfect repose of eternal felicity!

TO THOSE WHO SUFFER.

EVERY one has trouble upon earth: rich and poor, young and old, great and small,—none are exempt from the sad necessity of suffering. To suffer is our condition in this world. It is the state in which you and I, and our forefathers, have been born, in which our children shall be born, and from which no human effort can deliver us. For ever, and ever, and ever, there will be here below sickness, and trouble, and grief! There will be forever widows and orphans! There will be forever sorrowful mothers weeping over an empty cradle! Life, since sin entered into the world, seems to be one long sorrow; this sorrow may be softened, but it can never be taken away.

Since this is a truth—and who can deny it?—it is very useful to fix our minds often upon those considerations which may help to lighten our troubles, and to render them, if not sweet, at least profitable.

The first of these truths which religion teaches us, and which the simplest reasoning will confirm, is that nothing happens to us here below except by the holy will, or the express permission, of God; and this is equally true of the evil as of the good.

God is the Lord of the whole earth; He is the sole and sovereign ruler of the world; He governs all things, He knows all things; and not even a hair of our head, as He Himself assures us in the Holy Gospel, can fall without His will. Not a blade of grass springs up in the fields, not a single leaf falls in the forests, not a grain of sand stirs upon the earth, nor a single drop of water in the immensity of the ocean, in storm and in tempest, but the All-powerful God knows it, wills it, and commands it.

If it is thus of the inanimate creation, what must it be for us, the special object of His love? Our impatience and our murmurs come

from our want of faith. Our gaze being ever rooted to the earth, we never lift our hearts on high; wholly attentive to the secondary causes of our troubles, to those events which afflict us, to the little world around us, we fail to mount as high as heaven, and see manifest in all things the perfect will of God. We act like animals which bite the stick and not the hand which strikes them.

In thus afflicting us, God, far from being cruel to us, shows us often the greatest mercy; for afflictions are most useful to our soul, and, generally, God sends them only for our greater good.

We constantly deceive ourselves in our judgment of things. We look at everything from a point of view which is false, because it is not Christian, and all things appear to us in a wrong light. That which is in reality good we call evil, and that which is in reality evil we call good.

What is this life, and how can it be defined, if it is not a preparation for our true life, which is the life eternal? We are not placed on earth simply for our own pleasure and amusement, just to eat, to drink, to sleep, and to follow in all things our own inclinations. . . . We are here to merit, by a faithful fulfilment of the laws of our Creator, the infinite happiness of heaven, to which His goodness destines us, and which, for this reason, can alone satisfy our desires. Therefore, all that brings us nearer to this end must be good and useful. All that prepares for us a greater happiness hereafter must be wholly desirable; and, on the other hand, all that tends to diminish the happiness of the life to come must be dangerous and evil, and still more dangerous and evil all that may deprive us of that life forever. There is the reality, there is the truth, the rest is nothing but illusion. By this light, the only true light, everything must be judged.

Hence it is easy to understand that that which is good in the eyes of the world (pleasure, gayety, the abundance of all that can gratify the senses and flatter the pride), being but obstacles to the eternal life which Jesus Christ came to merit for us, are, therefore, inevitable evils, or at least are fraught with danger. And this is why Our Lord has cursed them in the Holy Gospel.

On the contrary, privation, suffering, poverty, humiliation, all that the world calls evil, is unquestionably a great good, since it draws us nearer God, recalls to us our eternal hopes, and detaches us from every obstacle to our salvation, to our true happiness. And this is also why Our Lord repeats so often: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven! Blessed are they that weep

blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted! Behold the promise of perfect happiness, but it can only be realized in heaven; on earth, happiness is the consolation of hope, and of a peaceful, patient waiting for the joy that is to come. Therefore, lest our hope should be vain, let us choose the road which leads to paradise, otherwise this hope will prove a vain chimera, and we may take in its stead the appalling conviction that misery shall be our endless portion. This road of salvation is the Christian life, is flight from sin and hatred of it, the love of Jesus, prayer, the frequentation of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, all destined by divine goodness to enable us to advance and to persevere in the right way. Let us be wise, and not abuse the life which God has given; it is a precious treasure, and He lends it only once. Woe to him who misuses it!

Let us be willing to make any sacrifice; let us profit by all our sufferings and sorrows; soon will come the gladness of a perfect repose, and soon the moment of eternal consolation! Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God! Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill! Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted!

WHAT HAVE I DONE THAT GOD SHOULD SEND ME SO MUCH SUFFERING?

This is the first thought that arises in the minds of many when grief and suffering come. Instead of asking God for strength to bear their troubles, they begin murmuring against Him. Men of little faith! we might say to them, even as Our Lord Jesus Christ said to His doubting disciples. Men of little faith! who understand not the secrets of God! When He visits you with suffering, never ask Him, let me warn you, such a question as this, "What have I done that I should suffer so much?" Ninety-nine times out of a hundred God might silence you by unfolding before your terrified eyes the long and shameful series of your sins, which nothing but your religious indifference could hide from your sight. These sins, so heavy and so multiplied, have a thousand times merited hell with its eternal pains, and yet you dare to complain of the punishment—comparatively so slight—which the justice of God inflicts upon you. And God might always answer by showing you the terrible flames of purgatory. What are the sufferings of the present life when compared with the fearful expiation which awaits us beyond the

tomb? Are you so pure that you can face it without trembling? Are you so blind that you cannot perceive that great suffering and long suffering awaits you in purgatory as the penance of your faults? Then is it not entirely for your good that you should suffer in this life? The flames of purgatory are the same as those of hell; the only difference is that they are not eternal. Who can dwell in a devouring fire? And is it not a great blessing to be able to avoid it greatly, if not wholly, by Christian penance, and by suffering, meekly accepted?

Lastly, God could always answer by pointing out to you heaven, the crib, and the cross. The journey of life is a fleeting probation. Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh for your salvation, gave you first the example of patience, so that, by a holy use of suffering, you might sanctify your soul, and thus accumulate an eternal weight of glory. Eternity! Eternity! Keep it ever before your eyes, but most especially when tried and tempted. Poverty and its privations, sickness with its constant anguish, even imprisonment with its long and wearisome hours, the loss of those we love,—yea, all the manifold trials of life, are instantly transfigured when the light of eternity rests on them. When you suffer, go to Jesus Christ. He is the divine Consoler. "Come to me," He says to those with sorrow, "Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls." "Amen, Amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you."

Oh! how well they understood these great truths, those saints who supported not only with patience, but with acts of thanksgiving with rapture and joy, those moral and physical trials which Providence sent them. What solid happiness, and what wonderful merits. they drew from the trials we receive with such affliction. Thus we see a St. Ludovine, fastened to a bed of pain for more than forty consecutive years, preserving such a perfect serenity that it might have been thought she suffered nothing.

Thus St. Louis, King of France, said, when speaking of his cap

tivity in Egypt, where he had endured much from the Saracens, "I rejoice, and I render more thanks to God for the patience which He grants me in my captivity than as if I had conquered the whole world."

St. Elizabeth, Duchess of Thuringia, driven out of her estates, with her four little children, forsaken by every one, and reduced to beggary, went to a convent of Franciscans, to whom she had been formerly a great benefactress, and caused a Te Deum to be sung as an act of thanksgiving to God for having granted her the precious favor of suffering for His love.

St. Joseph of Calasanza, celebrated in Italy, said that work and trouble count for nothing when we have paradise in view; and he loved to repeat the words of the Apostle St. Paul, "The sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us."

Courage, therefore! Whatever we may be, whether sinful or just, let us understand the adorable mystery of suffering! It is the visitation of God; it is the most precious, the most desirable gift of His mercy.

The benefit that I expect is so great, said St. Francis, that it renders all my sufferings sweet. Whoever desire to gain heaven must prepare themselves to suffer.

God found nothing more excellent to bestow upon His only Son Jesus; upon Mary, His spouse, His mother, His chosen and well-beloved creature; upon His saints; upon all His faithful children! If you suffer with Jesus Christ, you shall be glorified with Him.

It is by the cross we gain the crown.

ON PATIENCE IN SICKNESS.

Sickness is the sad heirloom of humanity; it is man's sorrowful possession during his earthly pilgrimage; it is the child of sin, and the precursor of that last and terrible punishment which we call death. It is a partial and anticipated destruction of that guilty flesh which, by the sin of our first parents, has fallen beneath the empire of the devil, and can henceforth only enter heaven after having been purified by the dolorous baptism of death and revivified by the resurrection. God, who is infinite goodness and life itself, is not the author of sickness nor of death, even as He is not the author of sin, which is itself the cause of both. "God made not death," say the Holy Scriptures, and it is to the devil, who has "the empire of death,"

and is the "prince of this world," that all the evils which desolate humanity must be attributed. But if God is not the author of sickness nor of death, He permits both, first as an expiation, and afterward as a trial; an expiation for sin, and a trial for our sanctification. Christian patience is the consoling balm, by means of which both trials and expiation may be happily and peacefully borne, and in this we have only to follow in the footsteps of Our Lord and Master, since "He is gone before, carrying His cross."

Patience is necessary to all men, for all men must suffer, but it is especially necessary in sickness and pain, because it alleviates suffering and makes it meritorious. Patience renders us like Our Lord, who suffered so much for love of us, and has left us the adorable example of His sweetness and serenity in the midst of suffering. Patience is that Christian disposition of the soul which makes us accept and bear peacefully for the love of God, and in union with Jesus Christ, all the afflictions to which it pleases Divine Providence that we should submit. It is a victory of the spirit over the flesh, of grace over nature, which subdues the revolts of a body rebellious against pain, and causes it to submit to the perfect will of God.

It must not be imagined that patience consists in a certain insensibility to evil and to suffering. If this were the case, patience would have no merit, and suffering would be neither an expiation nor a trial.

It is related in the life of St. Francis of Sales that one day when visiting a poor sick woman, of whose wonderful resignation he had heard much, the great bishop determined to test the reality of this virtue, and to discover if she truly possessed the grace of holy patience. He therefore began to question the sick woman, to praise her tranquillity, to exaggerate her sufferings, and to admire her courage and her silence, knowing well that by this means he should discover the real sentiments of her heart. "Alas!" replied the poor woman, "if you could only look into my heart you would cease to praise me. You judge by outward appearances, and I seem to be at peace, but within all is troubled and disturbed. My patience only holds by a thread, and if it were not for God's powerful help I feel that I should give way to murmurs, complaints, and tears; but God has put a seal upon my lips so that I dare not complain; and through His mercy I know the value of the trials which He has sent me." Then the Saint, going out from her room, said to those who accompanied him, "This woman has true Christian patience. We should rejoice at her afflictions rather than pity her, for each one of her sufferings is counted before God."

St. Francis himself when he was ill gave a noble example of calmness and resignation. Practising what he had taught to others, he suffered the most acute pain with such patience and sweetness that he was never heard to utter the least complaint, nor to express a single desire which was not conformable to the holy will of God. There was ever written in his face the perfect serenity of a soul triumphant over suffering. He took without any apparent repugnance the most disagreeable medicines, submitted himself entirely to his medical advisers, and was constantly saying that his friends did too much for him. Thus, in sickness as in health, St. Francis followed in the steps of his Divine Master, obeying the command which He Himself gave to His Apostles and to all Christians: "I have given you an example, that as I have done so you do also."

COMPENSATIONS.

THERE is a charming little French song, in which an old trooper relates to the children of his native village the story of his life, of his campaigns, of his sorrows and his joys, and the touching recital concludes by these simple and consoling words:

. . . "Dans sa bonté profonde,
Dieu, qui créa grands et petits,
Fit du bonheur pour tout le monde:
En vérité, je vous le dis!"

which might be rendered—

Each human lot is pre-ordained by God;
Thus men are born to high or lowly station,
But *happiness* He hath in love bestowed
On every creature in His great creation.

Nothing could be more true than this. There is happiness everywhere, even as there is sorrow everywhere. The great goodness of God has indisputable claims which are as absolute as the claims of His justice, but His Divine Providence has with marvellous wisdom provided certain compensations. We are all the children of God; He sends us all happiness and joy. We are all sinners; He sends us all suffering, grief, and expiations.

The poor believe that the rich enjoy every comfort, and possess unmingled happiness. They are greatly deceived.

Those who are born to high estate shed quite as many tears as their poorer brethren, and very often more. I remember calling one

day on a lady who was extremely rich; she had a handsome house, a number of servants, and an income of more than £400,000 a year. Do you know what were her first words? "You see before you," she said, "the most miserable woman in the world!" And she began telling me how for many years she had passed her days and nights in weeping, and in a constant struggle against a terrible temptation to despair. She had lost a husband whom she tenderly loved; her children were engaged in a lawsuit against each other, and her youngest son was dishonoring his name by a life of sinful excess. And yet this unhappy woman had £400,000 a year. It would be easy to mention hundreds of similar cases.

The sufferings of the rich do not resemble those of the poor: they are less material, less palpable; but they are as bitter, as deep, and as acute. The rich do not suffer from bodily privation, nor from the anguish of hunger and cold, which are indeed terrible sufferings, but they have heart troubles, bodily sickness, and mental grief; then the education which the rich receive, and the life of luxury and refinement that they lead, tend greatly to increase their sensibility to suffering, and sometimes even to such a degree that a single grief will suffice to destroy the happiness of their lives.

With the poor it is not so: God mercifully softens for them the troubles which overwhelm the rich. Experience proves it. The principal cross which the workman has to bear is that of bodily want and the severity of daily labor. Accustomed from childhood to a life of poverty, he preserves a certain simplicity which enables him to find pleasure in simple amusements.

But for the rich man all pleasure has grown monotonous, and amusements have long lost their charm and novelty. For the poor man the least possession is a treasure, the simplest dish a banquet, the simplest enjoyment a real pleasure. This is the divine plan of compensations; and it is so perfectly carried out that after much reflection it is difficult to say whether riches give happiness, or if the state of life which is most to be desired is not, after all, that humble lowly lot which the Son of God, our Saviour, chose for Himself, for His holy Mother, and for His Apostles, when, at the time of His incarnation, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

IN WHAT TRUE HAPPINESS CONSISTS.

One of the sweetest pictures which history presents to us is unquestionably the life of St. Francis of Assisi. He lived at the begin-

ning of the thirteenth century. In his lifetime even he was called the Seraphic, and he was indeed rather an angel than a man.

One day, accompanied by one of his faithful friends, Fra Leone (Brother Leo), St. Francis was returning to St. Mary of the Angels, where he lived. It was then winter, and very cold. The Saint had desired his companion to walk on in front of him, so that they could pray to God with greater recollection. Thus they walked on in silence, wholly occupied with divine things. "Fra Leone," cried St. Francis, "do you know in what perfect happiness consists? If we had all the riches of Italy, and all the riches of France and Germany, and of the whole world; if we could have everything by wishing for it, and had no desire ungratified, Fra Leone, my child, with all this we should not possess the perfection of happiness." And as the Saint, having said these words, became once more absorbed in meditation, Fra Leone walked on before him again, thinking over the words that St. Francis had spoken. A few minutes after he called to him again, and exclaimed with fervor, "Fra Leone, Fra Leone, if we should enjoy all the pleasures of life, and should possess all the luxuries of the world, and should be satiated with delights, believe me, Fra Leone, we should not possess the perfection of happiness." The good brother listened as before, and then walked on in silence. A third time the Saint called his friend—"Fra Leone," he said, "if we were elevated to the highest rank of human dignity; if we ruled over nations as princes and kings; if we were the masters of the world, and saw all men prostrate before us; even if God Himself should invest us with the supreme authority which He confides to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ; and we beheld the faithful come to kiss our feet and implore our benediction—even then, Fra Leone, we should not possess perfect happiness." At last, when St. Francis had called a third time to Fra Leone, and had said that happiness could not be found in the pursuit of knowledge, in the esteem of men, nor in the possession of any creature, the good brother answered, "Father, you have spoken of all those things which men chiefly desire, and have said that happiness is not to be found in them; I entreat you, therefore, to tell me in what true joy consists." And St. Francis answered, "Fra Leone, little sheep of God, true joy consists in seeking only God. If you always do His holy will, if you love Him with all your heart, if you apply yourself before all things to please your Saviour, and to follow Him to Calvary; if, like Him, you are meek and humble of heart, if you pardon those who offend you, if you do good to all for the love of Jesus, if you weep for your

sins in perfect penitence; in a word, if your conscience is upright and pure, and if your soul is prepared by a truly holy life for the eternal happiness of heaven—Fra Leone, my child, this is true joy, and you shall be happy with a perfect happiness." While speaking thus, the face of St. Francis grew radiant, and his eyes were bathed in tears. Brother Leo listened as to a voice from heaven, and derived such profit during the whole of his life from the lesson he received that he lived full of merit and died in the odor of sanctity.

LITTLE VIRTUES.

THAT which is little in the eyes of man is often great in the sight of God; and the Christian faith teaches us that God loves the simple and lowly of heart. Judging only by outward appearances, we may divide all virtues into two classes, little and great. Great virtues, or at least those which men call great, are brilliant and striking qualities, such as claim universal notice and admiration; while those which men call little are simple, hidden virtues, concealed from the eyes of the world, and absorbed, as it were, in the sweet completeness of a good and holy life.

"Every one," said St. Francis of Sales, in his ever gentle, gracious words, "every one desires to have brilliant virtues and to display them, fixed to the cross, so that they may be seen and admired from afar. Very few are eager to gather those which, like the thyme and violet, grow at the foot and in the shadow of that tree of life. Yet these are they which have the sweetest perfume, and have been most freely watered with the Blood of Jesus, who gave this precept to His children as their most important lesson, 'Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart.'"

It is not every one who is called upon to exercise the great virtue of magnanimity, firmness, patience, endurance, constancy, and courage. The occasions which call them forth are very rare; yet all desire to possess them, because they are seen and known of men, and thus even human vanity is often unconsciously soothed and gratified. As to little virtues, the world esteems them not, but passes them utterly by, and the heart that desires them must needs be pure and true. Who, indeed, pays any attention to the virtue which gently yields to another's ill temper, and patiently bears with another's imperfections, which meekly endures a little injustice, an unreasonable prejudice, a distasteful companionship, and all the thousand little pinpricks which do so goad and irritate our faulty human nature.

that we may truly call them the small miseries of life? Who troubles to praise or to exalt the humility of those who bear a refusal with sweetness, who are grateful for a benefit, who treat their inferiors with kindness and courtesy, and are tender and pitiful to the poor? All these we consider mere trifles; we desire only those virtues which St. Francis of Sales described as "*braves et bien vêtues*," viz., virtues which are dazzling and outwardly attractive; and we do not consider that life is so made up of little things and trifling actions that for extraordinary virtues there is very little room. Opportunities for making a fortune are not to be met with every day; but every day we may gain a little, and if we do but husband our small resources, we shall certainly grow rich in time. We should quickly accumulate great spiritual riches, and should lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven, if we would but employ in God's most holy service all the little occasions which we meet with every moment.

Let us therefore rejoice that we can so easily please God, and become perfect. Let us never lose one happy chance of sanctifying our life, but, lifting our hearts in prayer, let us consecrate our most trifling actions, our lightest labors, and our lightest cares, by offering them to God. Let us do all for Jesus, and we shall not lose our reward: like the ant, which during the summer accumulates little by little its provisions for the winter, we shall find, when life's labor is over, that we shall reap in a glorious and eternal harvest the reward for which we have worked so humbly here below.

MEEKNESS.

By speaking to you of meekness, and by trying to induce you to practise it, let me assure you that I am doing you a very great service. For meekness is the fountainhead from which a sweet and virtuous nature springs; and to possess a sweet and virtuous nature is also to possess the secret of a happy life. Meekness is that Christian virtue, most rare and lovely, which enables us to yield constantly to others for the love of God, to bear everything from them, and to give them as little as possible to bear from us. Meekness is to our daily life just what oil is to the motion of a machine. The oil which is dropped into the wheelwork does not seem of such great importance. And yet, if it were forgotten, what creaking, what straining, and what obstructions would be the result! And thus it is with meekness. It is the virtue of virtues, incessantly enjoined upon us by our Heavenly Father as the balm of all our actions, the greatest

preservative of society, and that most exquisite flower of Christian charity, which it is necessary to practise at all times and in every place.

Humility and gentleness, such is the great lesson which Our Saviour hath bequeathed to us. Jesus is called the Lamb of God in the Holy Scriptures, not only because of the sacrifice of the cross, but because of the perfect all-enduring meekness which He showed during His whole life, and especially during His Passion. Never a reproach, never one word of anger! When standing bound before Caiphas, He received a blow and was treated as a blasphemer; He answered simply to the servant who struck Him, "If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou Me?" Our blessed Lord preserved this marvellous meekness even unto death. When He was hanging on the cross in the last terrible agony, He could speak only words of sweetness to His murderers. He prayed God, His Father, to pardon them, and consoled with a divine hope the penitent thief crucified at His side!

"Nothing gives so much edification to others as meekness," said St. Francis de Sales, who was himself a perfect model of Christian gentleness. In him this beautiful virtue was ever conspicuous. His looks, his words, his manner, all was sweetness. Saint Vincent de Paul, who had the happiness to see him, said that he had never known so meek a man, and added that he seemed to see in him a living picture of the Saviour's loving-kindness. If he refused a favor which he could not grant without wounding his conscience, he would do so with so much love and gentleness that those who had asked it would always leave him with as much content as if it had been granted. He was equally good and kind to all; to his superiors, his equals, his inferiors, in his own family, and in the midst of strangers; how great a contrast to those who, in his own words, appear to be "*des anges dans la rue, et les diables à la maison.*" He never complained of any oversight on the part of his servants, and whenever he gave them any directions it was with the greatest kindness. Gentleness is always the best method of enforcing obedience, and the words of the Gospel are verified every day: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land." "I have tried to govern in many different ways," said St. Jane Frances of Chantal, "and I have never found a better way than that which is based upon gentleness and patience."

We often hear very pious people, Christian women, for instance, complain that they cannot lead their husband or their children back

to God. Why do they not use the only means by which they may attain the end they so greatly desire? Are flies ever attracted by vinegar? Much more is gained by gentleness than by severity, and St. Vincent de Paul said that during his life he had given three severe reprimands, thinking that he had good reason to do so, and not one had any effect; while those which he had administered with gentleness had always had a good result.

St. Francis de Sales, by his sweetness, could obtain from others all that he wished, and he often succeeded in converting the most obstinate sinners who had resisted every effort until then. This was also the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul. This holy priest once confided a great sinner to the care of a missionary of his company, in the hope of his conversion; but all was in vain, and the missionary entreated St. Vincent to use his own influence; and the Saint, having spoken for some instants to the man, converted him without trouble. This sinner afterward declared that it was the gentleness and charity of the Saint which so quickly touched his heart.

It is when we are moved to anger, or too harshly reproved by a superior, or insulted by another, that it is especially necessary to practise meekness. Oh, how dear to the Sacred Heart of Jesus are those meek and humble souls which, for love of Him, bear affronts with patience, pardon their enemies, and return good for evil! It is not difficult to be sweet-tempered when nothing occurs to vex us; but just a little contradiction, and behold! we grow indignant, and throw out fire and flames like Mount Vesuvius. We must have a truer meekness than this, and must pass through this life as a lily among thorns. The true Christian ever preserves a peace in his heart which influences every action, and is visible to all, and this in adversity as in prosperity.

When we are obliged to answer some one who has insulted us, let us be careful to do so with gentleness. A soft answer will extinguish the fire of anger. When moved it is better to be silent, and if through human weakness we are sometimes carried away by anger, let us immediately endeavor to grow calm, and seek an opportunity of speaking kindly to him who has offended us.

Let us carefully avoid giving way to ill-temper and angry feelings. Those who truly love God are never ill-tempered, because the thought of the presence of God, and of His holy will, calms the soul even in the midst of contradictions, and thus the true Christian is gentle and courteous to every one. But this gentleness cannot be obtained without a constant effort, nor without a great love of Jesus Christ, and a

faithful practice of religion. Experience teaches us that we are never so charitable to others as when we are faithfully serving God. In this as in everything, religion shows herself sole mistress of the happiness of men; and if life is hard and bitter, it is because they reject and will not listen to her gentle voice.

HUMILITY.

In one of the most divine passages of the divine Gospel, Our Lord Jesus Christ declares that Christian perfection consists in understanding and practising two words: humility and meekness. "Come to me," He says to us, "all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet and my burden light."

What, therefore, is humility, and what is meekness? Two excellent subjects for meditation.

Humility is a Christian virtue, which enables us to perceive our own misery and nothingness, and to render to God the glory and honor of all the good we do; it subdues our foolish pride, and teaches us never to exalt ourselves or to despise others.

Humility is a virtue, that is to say, a victory and a strength. We are all inclined, by reason of original sin, to pride, vanity, and vainglory. In order to repress this evil tendency, we need strength, and must ever wage a constant and untiring combat. This strength is no other than the virtue of humility.

Humility is a Christian virtue. The strength which is bestowed on us in order to subdue our pride comes to us from Jesus Christ, the only source of every grace. By baptism Jesus Our Saviour established Himself in our soul as a king in His kingdom, as a master in His house; and He imparts to us the spirit of holiness to communicate to us all His virtues, and, among others, His most holy and most perfect humility. Jesus Christ is, therefore, the first principle of the humility of His disciples; and the Holy Spirit, who unites us to Our Saviour that we may be like unto Him, is the inexhaustible source of humility. By the sacrament of confirmation this divine Spirit communicates to us all the strength of Jesus, and thus bestows on us the most powerful means of triumphing over every vice, and especially over pride. This strength is nourished and increased by the Holy Eucharist and by constant prayer, and by these means alone can we possess the secret of perseverance in Christian humility.

Humility makes known to us what we truly are, and reveals to us our utter insignificance and unworthiness. In order that we may detest pride and resist it, Jesus Christ teaches us clearly that it is only a folly and an illusion. The proud man persuades himself that he is a most blameless and indeed an almost perfect character; he is full of self-complacence; he desires and seeks the good opinion of men, and is irritated and surprised if they fail to regard him with the same amount of esteem and admiration that he bestows so lavishly upon himself. All these sentiments are false, contrary to the truth, and are only a lying illusion by which Satan, the father of lies, seeks to destroy our souls. By ourselves and of ourselves we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing. All the good which is in us comes from Jesus Christ and belongs to Jesus Christ, even our very existence, of which He is the Creator, and which depends wholly upon Him. The light which is shed over the whole earth comes from the sun; and does not this light remain even here below the sun's peculiar property? Supposing that the earth could think and speak, what would you answer if it said to you, "Look at me, and behold my splendor; this light is mine, it is my own possession, and all the glory and honor due to it are mine"? You would laugh in derision, and might in justice reply, "O foolish and self-deceived! of thyself thou art nothing but a dark, dense, heavy mass; all the splendor which transfigures thee, all the light which surrounds thee, comes from the sun and belongs to the sun, yes, even to the feeblest, faintest ray. Wait a little till the night shall come, and thou shalt be dark as any dungeon." And thus it is with Jesus Christ and every one of us. Jesus is the principle of all the good we possess, the source of all light, strength, and perfection, and we depend entirely upon Him. It is the Apostle St. Paul who asks, "What hast thou that thou hast not received? and if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" Therefore, of ourselves and by ourselves we are nothing, and we merit nothing, no honor, no esteem, no glory.

But we must go further, and must recognize by the light of humility that not only are we nothing of ourselves, but we are miserable sinners, worthy of punishment and all confusion. Our sins come not from God, but wholly from ourselves; and sin being evil, despicable, and deserving of punishment, it is quite natural that in our character of sinners we should be filled with shame, and should sincerely despise ourselves, and acknowledge the perfect justice of the punishments and humiliations which God sends us from time to time.

The Christian who loves his Saviour delights to render Him the honor which belongs to Him, and to annihilate himself in the divine Presence, acknowledging simply and peacefully that he is a poor sinner, and that he confides only in the love and the mercy of God.

Humility is thus a pure act of divine love, and it is this which constitutes excellence. Humility is the perfection of the love of God, just as meekness is the perfection of love for our neighbor, while both united are the perfection of a true love for ourselves. It may be easily understood how a Christian who is truly humble shrinks from seeking his own glory, and thus appropriating that which belongs to Jesus Christ. By humility we become imbued with a perfect sense of honor, as regards our relations both with God and men. And is it honorable, let me ask, to take and keep that which belongs of right to another? All honor, praise, esteem, glory, and greatness belong to God alone, the author and principle of every good. Humility is truth and justice. It is, in the order of religion, just what justice and honesty are in our relations with society and with our fellow-men. Humility prevents us from exalting ourselves and despising others. Do we know the secrets of God, and the measure of grace which every soul receives? I may presumptuously compare myself with my brother, and imagine that I am more devout, more charitable, more spiritual than he. I may perceive that my intellect is clearer, my memory stronger, and my judgment upon all occasions superior; but is this any reason that in reality and in the sight of God I should possess any greater merit? Not in the least; for here all things are relative, and all must render according to that which they receive. The servant who, having received only two talents, gained two talents more, was made in all things equal to him who had received five talents and gained five talents more. "And unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required." This is true of all the gifts, both natural and supernatural, which God in His infinite wisdom bestows upon each one of His creatures. Let us never compare ourselves with others, or esteem ourselves above others, because we do not possess even the fragments of the knowledge which we need to enable us to form an equitable judgment. Let us especially guard against despising any one; the Pharisee in the parable despised the poor publican whom God blessed and exalted on account of his humility. The man whom you despise, the sinner you condemn, the woman from whom you shrink, may be, each and all, converted and become great saints. Let us detest, despise, and unhesitatingly condemn the evil which is in

them, even as we condemn it in ourselves; nothing is more just, more Christian, and more salutary; but let us ever distinguish between the sinner and the sin, and faithfully preserve Christian charity in deep humility.

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, grant to us a true humility!

"BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT."

THESE words were pronounced by our blessed Lord at the very commencement of that part of His preaching which we call the Sermon on the Mount. And who are they whom He declares blessed and to whom He promises eternal happiness? What is signified by these words of the Gospel, *Pauperes Spiritu?* God is the Father of light, the Creator of the human intellect, the Sovereign Lord of wisdom and of science; faith is a divine and radiant light superadded to the light of human reason; and the want of intelligence and education has ever been regarded by the Christian religion as a great misfortune and a thing most worthy of compassion; therefore the poor in spirit must not be sought for, as has been falsely asserted, only among the poor and ignorant, since the virtue so greatly commended by Our Lord may be practised by the loftiest intellect as well as by the lowliest. The words of the Gospel simply mean, Blessed are they whose hearts are detached from the perishable possessions of the world. Blessed the Christian who, for the love of God, is detached from the riches, the honors, and the fleeting joys of earth. In exchange for the worthless possessions he has renounced, God shall give to him an eternal reward, and even here on earth he shall live a life of union with his Saviour and his God if he only persevere in this pure and perfect love.

Evangelical poverty of spirit is therefore simply the spirit of poverty and voluntary detachment from all that is not God; it is the spirit of humility; it is the perfection of the love of Jesus; and this is why Our Lord promises the kingdom of heaven as its reward. All the Saints have been in this divine sense poor in spirit.

St. Francis of Sales was perfectly poor in spirit; he desired nothing but the love of God and the accomplishment of His holy will; he never considered himself, he gave to the Church and to the poor all that he possessed, and thought so little of himself that he was contented with anything, with sickness as with health, with insult as with honor, with poverty and want as with comfort and luxury. He gave away everything, even his clothes and his furniture. He

wore such shabby things that a beggar, to whom some of his clothes had been given, was very indignant and went to complain to St. Francis, who could not help laughing at the sight of the tattered garments.

St. Charles Borromeo, the great cardinal and archbishop of Milan, who belonged to a princely family, and had an immense revenue, gave away everything he possessed; he was only severe to himself, sleeping on a wooden board, eating nothing but bread and peas, drinking only water, and sparing himself no trouble and fatigue; and it is said that once eight patches were counted on his scarlet robe. This great and good man was also poor in spirit.

St. Francis of Assisi, the sweetest and gentlest of the Saints, was known in his youth as the bravest cavalier and the most brilliant and accomplished young man of his country and his time. But he forcibly realized that heaven was of far higher value than earth, and that it was the truest wisdom to despise the trifling pleasures of the world and to press forward to the eternal realities that lie beyond. He renounced everything, even the rich attire which marked his family and his rank, and, clothed in the coarsest habit, a cord for his girdle, barefooted, and destitute of everything but the one treasure he desired, even Jesus, his Master and Lord, he cried, his eyes bathed with tears, his heart filled with joy and inflamed with love, "*Deus meus et omnia!*—My God and my all!"

And thus it is with all the Saints and, to a certain extent, with all true Christians. If we would be the disciples of Jesus Christ, if we ever desire to reach heaven, we must be poor in spirit, that is, ready to renounce every worldly advantage for the service and love of our divine Master. Those who have not this spirit fall far short of all the Gospel inculcates, and the kingdom of heaven is not for them. Poverty of spirit is the sublime epitome of Christian morality.

FOURTH PART

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

In all the works of God there is nothing that is worthless or insignificant. The smallest flower, a grain of dust, the tiniest insect, each and all reveal the wisdom, the omnipotence, the infinite greatness of their Creator, as clearly as the sun itself and all the glories of the starlit heavens.

And thus it is with the Christian religion; it has come forth, like the great world of nature, from the hands of God Himself; or, rather, it is that manifestation, that revelation, which God has made of Himself to the reasonable creatures whom He has deigned to create. And therefore we may discover, even in the smallest details of the faith we hold, a depth and beauty no less wonderful than the loveliness of nature; and in contemplating both we may truly exclaim, God alone could work such wonders; the finger of God is there! Let us take, for example, the sign of the Cross, that simple religious act which is so universal and so frequently practised during the course of the day. We all make this holy sign, but how many of us give any thought to the mysteries it signifies! It is thus that the ox and the horse browse on the sweet flowers hidden in the meadow grass, unconscious that they are there.

From want of reflection, we fail to attach to the sign of the Cross the importance that it merits. It was first instituted by the Apostles themselves, who, invested with the authority of Jesus Christ, taught this religious practice to the first disciples of the Gospel.

The sign of the Cross is the sign of the Christian, that is to say, it is the outward sign which distinguishes the Christian from other men. And why is this?

1st. Because it recalls to him who makes it, and to those who see it made, that Jesus Christ is the God of Christians and the Lord of their whole lives. Because it reminds us that God has loved us so much as to give Himself up for our sakes to suffer on the Cross, and that we must love Him with our whole hearts. It places incessantly before our eyes Jesus Christ crucified; and Jesus crucified is the di

vine and living rule of life to each one of His disciples, and His sacred Cross their moral law. The sign of the Cross recalls to him who makes it with reverence and devotion that he is bound to imitate in his daily conduct the penance, mortification, humility, meekness, patience, detachment, chastity, and obedience of his Master; His love for His heavenly Father and His Blessed Mother, and toward all men; His mercy to His enemies, and His love of suffering.

2d. The sign of the Cross is distinctively the sign of the Christian, because it reminds him of the blessed eternity which awaits him. It was after His passion and death that Jesus rose again. And by His Cross He entered into glory. And so it must be with His disciples. Their glory in heaven must be the full fruition of the crucified life they have led on earth, like unto the life of their Saviour. The Gospel also declares to us that when He shall come at the last day to judge the world, the sacred sign of the Cross shall appear in the heavens, to be recognized by the elect with thankfulness and love, and by the reprobate with fear and trembling; for then shall it be the disciples of the Cross, and none but they, whom He will acknowledge for His own.

3d. It is the sign of the Christian because it brings before his mind the most important doctrines of religion. It recalls the mystery of the holy and undivided Trinity, for in making it we say, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; three persons, but one God. In the name; and not, In the names. And also the mystery of the Incarnation, that is to say, the coming down of the Son of God from heaven to earth, to assume a body and soul like ours in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary; for, in saying "In the Name of the Son," we move the hand down from the forehead to the breast, a lively image of the annihilation of the Son of God, who reposes in the hearts of the faithful, as formerly in the chaste womb of Mary. And, again, the mystery of the Redemption, since it was upon the Cross He died to wash away our sins, to merit for us pardon and salvation, and to open the gates of heaven which sin had closed. And the mystery of the Church of God, that great society of the disciples of Jesus Christ, that perfect union, holy, Catholic, and apostolic, of the children of the Cross; since, being the same for all, it is necessarily the sign of their union in one body under one head: a most distinctive mark of the Catholic Church, for it recalls by its unity that the Church is one, and by its universality that the Church is Catholic.

In considering all that is symbolized by this sacred sign, we may

therefore clearly understand why it is employed by the Church in the administration of all holy things, in the sacraments, in every blessing, at the beginning and end of her prayers.

Let us make it often, but especially when tempted and when troubled; also before and after meals; and when we make it, let us be careful to remember what it signifies, and the obligations imposed on all who bear the holy name of Christians.

ON REVERENCE FOR THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Too much importance cannot be attached to the necessity of making this sacred sign with reverence and devotion. Any Catholic who with love performs this simple act of piety will soon see its excellent effects, and we propose it to all as one of the easiest and most efficacious means of sanctifying the day.

It is necessary to be very careful never to make the sign of the Cross badly; that is, to make it from habit without thinking of it, and when laughing, or to make it in haste without taking the trouble to move the right hand from the forehead to the breast, and from the left shoulder to the right. It is not necessary every time you cross yourself to say, "In the Name of the Father," etc.; it is good and beneficial to repeat this invocation, but it is both useful and holy to cross yourself without saying anything.

Nothing is more edifying than to see a Christian make the sign of the Cross with care and reverence and in a truly Catholic spirit. The celebrated Père de Ravignan always crossed himself with scrupulous care; any one might see that he was proud to sign himself with the Cross of Christ. By this he preached even before preaching, and made a deep impression upon his hearers without having said a single word. A Protestant clergyman who went to hear him one day at Notre Dame said to his companion, after having seen the venerable religious sign himself with such holy and majestic gravity, "He has preached already; the sermon is finished and we might go."

The sign of the Cross rightly made unites the soul to God, gives the spirit of recollection, drives away the devil, and powerfully dissipates temptation; it gives to the Christian the spirit of faith, and preserves him from distraction and from worldliness; but if made with negligence, it loses all its influence and virtue.

Parents and masters should carefully impress upon children this religious practice; and since children are like little monkeys, who

imitate all they see, fathers and mothers, masters and mistresses should begin by practising what they teach, and should always, both at home and at church, before and after work, before and after meals, make the sign of the Cross like true and faithful Catholics.

And now let me ask, have you felt a little conscience-smitten while reading this chapter? How do you make the sign of the Cross? Do you make it often during the day? Form now an earnest resolution to do all things in the spirit of faith, and never to make with indifference and distraction the sacred sign of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE PATER NOSTER.

We read in the Holy Gospel that Our Lord was praying one day, and that when His prayer was ended His Apostles approached Him and said, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." And Jesus answered them, "When you pray, say: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen." Then He added, to increase our confidence, "Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and shall say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves? And he should answer and say, Trouble me not. . . . Yet if he shall continue knocking, I say to you, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. . . . And I say to you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. . . . And which of you, if he ask his father bread, will he give him a stone? . . . If you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him?"

We must therefore pray with great confidence in the goodness of God; and we are sure to pray as He would have us when we speak the words which He Himself has taught us. But to do this in the best way possible, we ought thoroughly to understand the whole of this beautiful prayer, since every word contains a lesson that is divine.

The "Our Father" (or the Lord's Prayer) is composed of three parts—1st. A little preface. 2d. Three petitions which relate directly to God. 3d. Four petitions which relate directly to our own needs and those of our neighbor. The preface consists of these

words, "Our Father who art in heaven." The three petitions which relate directly to God are these—1st. Hallowed be Thy name. 2d. Thy kingdom come. 3d. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The four petitions which relate directly to our own needs and those of our neighbor are—1st. Give us this day our daily bread. 2. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. 3d. Lead us not into temptation. 4th. Deliver us from evil. Amen means So be it; or, May God grant me what I ask.

What could be more sweet or grand than this sacred prayer? Are not the first words sufficient to win the hearts of men?—"*Pater noster*—Our Father." Christians, it is a Father to whom we speak, a merciful Father who loves us, who bends down from the heights of His eternal glory to lift us by love up to Him. It is a Father, not a master, not a judge. He asks only filial confidence, good-will, and sincere love. How sweet it is to kneel at the feet of such a God!

We do not only say, "My Father," but "Our Father," for we are all brothers, members of one family, which is the Church of Jesus Christ. The Father of the family is our Father in heaven; our Mother is the Blessed Virgin Mary, who became the spouse of the Holy Ghost by the mystery of the Incarnation. Our brethren in heaven are the Saints who have lived before us, and are now gathered into their Father's home. And we, who are by baptism children of God, children of Mary, brethren of Jesus Christ, and brethren of the saints and martyrs, form here on earth one great family united to that family in heaven. We have a visible Father, the vicar of our invisible, omnipotent Father above—the head of the Church, whom we call, for this reason, Our Holy Father the Pope; our Mother is the Church, and all Christians are our brethren, and we all meet together at the sacred banquet of the Eucharist, being all fed by the same mysterious food, and thence deriving the strength we need to travel on through the journey of life until we go home to our Father in heaven.

See all that is comprehended in the first words of the Pater Noster. And where does our Father live? "In heaven." Therefore our dwelling-place and our true country are not here on earth; it is not to the things of earth that we must give the heart; our dwelling-place, our hopes, our treasures must all be in heaven, in that blessed eternity which shall succeed the fleeting years of life. How powerful a motive to enable us to resist the temptations by which we are surrounded! Let us turn from that which is passing to that

which shall forever endure. Let us love our Father and think constantly of the happiness He has prepared for us above.

Does not this little preface contain many subjects for meditation?

In the second part of this prayer Our Lord teaches us to ask His Father and our Father to spread over the whole earth the glory of His name. "*Sanctificetur nomen tuum*—Hallowed be Thy name." Yes, known, reverenced, loved, glorified, celebrated, praised; first, by ourselves, then by all our brethren, by the good and holy who honor it so perfectly, by sinners who blaspheme and reject and forget it. By these words we ask the propagation of the Christian faith throughout the universe, the extinction of idolatry, the conversion of heretics, infidels, and blasphemers; we ask that God will raise up holy priests and learned doctors of the faith, who will teach us by writing and preaching to know and serve our heavenly Father better; we solemnly protest against the terrible habit of blaspheming the sacred name of God, and we all strive in union to make compensation by our homage for the daring attacks of the impious; and thus, as if we would deafen and silence the voice of blasphemy that it might never mount upward to His ears, we cry with one heart and with one voice, *Sanctificetur nomen tuum.* "Father, Thy name be blessed, Thy holy name be praised, adored, loved, glorified in heaven."

"Thy kingdom come." This is the second petition of the Pater. And here we ask of God that the reign of His divine grace may be established and strengthened within us; that mortal sin may never stain our conscience; that we may never commit a wilful venial sin; that Jesus, the King of our souls, may govern us without any opposition, and find us wholly submissive to His sacred rule.

This petition is also a desire for the extension of the Catholic Church over the whole earth; for the Church is the kingdom of God, and the establishment of His divine reign in the midst of His own creation.

And thus we also ask and desire the coming of Our Lord, since the kingdom of God can only be completely established in this world by the second advent of Our Redeemer, who upon that day will quell and annihilate forever the rebellion of Satan and the triumphs of sin.

And, lastly, we thus renew day by day our desire of eternal happiness, and sigh for heaven, where our dear Lord has prepared for us a place, that we may reign eternally with Him.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is the third petition of the Pater.

There is nothing so truly good, so truly necessary, in this world as to know and accomplish the holy will of God. Outside of the divine will all is vanity and often sin. Good does, in a manner, cease to be good when done without regard to the will of God. Take an example: A man may say, "I am a workman and the father of a family; it is the will of God that I should labor honestly to gain a living for myself, my wife, and my children; if, instead of working, I passed my days, like sisters of charity, in praying, in nursing the sick, etc., I should neglect my duty and should do wrong. And yet, what can be better in itself than prayer, or nursing the sick? But for myself, under the circumstances in which Divine Providence has placed me, such works are not for me; and, though they are more perfect in themselves than manual labor, if I prayed instead of working, I should not be doing the will of God, and therefore for me that which is good would cease to be good."

The one thing necessary is to know and fulfil with love the holy will of God. In this, and for each one of us, all duty, all virtue, and all perfection consists. If each would do the will of God in that position in which His merciful Providence has placed them, peace, happiness, and order would have a universal reign. God wills only that which is good; He forbids only that which is evil. All that is good and useful to man, God wills; all that is hurtful to him, God forbids. Thus the will of God is our happiness, and happiness is the inevitable accomplishment of His will. As soon as we disregard it, misfortune comes upon us. For instance, a man who is the head of a house and the father of a family is, perhaps, an utterly miserable and disappointed man. And why is this? It is because his children despise his authority, or because his wife has forgotten her marriage vows, or because, through the dishonesty of others, he has lost his little fortune. But would not a remedy for all these evils, and for the grief which they occasion, have been found in the accomplishment of the will of God?

God willed that the children should be obedient, respectful, and attentive to the wishes of their father; God willed that the wife should be faithful, and patient, and true; God willed that the friend should be loyal and honorable, regarding the rights of others. They have not followed the will of God, and sin and sorrow are the inevitable consequences of this rebellion.

And therefore when we pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," it is as if we said, "O my God, I desire that I and all for whom I pray should be good and happy I desire that all men

should do good and avoid evil, that each one should perfectly fulfil his duty; first of all his duty as a Christian, and then his duty as a faithful subject, as a father, husband, son, and friend: his duty as a pure, upright, and honorable man." Could anything be better than this? It is to say, in other words, "I desire that the whole earth may be the abode of peace and happiness; and that when this earthly probation is ended, I and all for whom I pray may receive in heaven the imperishable rewards of virtue."

Only Jesus Our Lord could have expressed so much in such few and simple words.

And then if you suffer, if you are poor, if you are afflicted—and truly we do not want for troubles in this land of exile!—what perfect peace this thought will give you, It is the will of God! Yes, He wills it; not to cause you suffering, He is too pitiful for that; but to prove your fidelity, to enable you to merit a greater happiness in heaven, to purify you more completely from those stains of sin which, but for this expiation, would retain you long in the terrible flames of purgatory! This is why God sends you suffering. Receive it with resignation, if not with joy; and let it always lead us to lift our hearts to our merciful Father, and pray that He will take us to heaven after a life which He has purposely embittered to us by the trials He sends us as we journey on; and in every grief let us constantly say to Him, "O my good God, my heavenly Father, may Thy will be done in me, may I never murmur against the accomplishment of Thy holy will!" We may well treasure these words of the "Our Father." Happy he who can understand them, and still happier he who takes them as the only rule of his life and his desires!

We have now only to speak of the four last petitions, which relate to our spiritual and temporal needs.

1st. "Give us this day our daily bread." Our Lord thus enjoins us to ask from God all the daily necessaries of life. He desires that we should remember that God in His divine Providence watches over us and never forgets us.

It is our daily bread for which He wishes us to ask, or only that which we truly require; so that we may be able to say with St. Paul, "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content," not desiring that which is superfluous. It is like the manna of the Hebrews in the desert. Every morning it fell in great quantities around their camps, and every one collected enough for the day; but those who took more would find it spoiled and full of

worms. We should live on from day to day without undue anxiety about that future which does not belong to us. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." And every day we shall receive the grace we need to bear the cross the day shall bring, but not grace for the day that shall follow; then we must ask again from God. Let us therefore limit our desires to our present necessities: "Give us *this day* our daily bread."

2d. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." We sin every day, and every day we must ask pardon for our sins. God is so good, and His mercy is an inexhaustible abyss! Whatever our sins may be, however numerous, however grievous, we must never despair like Judas.

And in this petition we may see a wonderful means of reconciliation which divine mercy presents to all without distinction; for here the Eternal Judge, Jesus Christ Himself, declares to us that if we pardon those who have sinned against us, God our Father will surely pardon us. Who, then, can despair of forgiveness? "Pardon me, O my God," we may pray; "for I pardon all who have done me wrong. I know that Thou hast promised, and I rest upon Thine own infallible word."

And thus, for all true Christians, evil is changed into good. If any one injures us we have only to rejoice and to say, "I have been long burdened with sins, and trembled at the debt I knew not how to pay. Now God Himself has made my way clear. I will pardon this injury, this wrong, this outrage, with my whole heart, for the love of Jesus Christ, and I am assured that all my sins will be remitted by God. I pardon as a Christian should, and have nothing more to fear from my Eternal Judge." But in order to say this we must forgive wholly and sincerely, and reject for the future any idea or voluntary thought of revenge.

3d. "Lead us not into temptation." Our life on earth is a combat; our reward is Paradise. Our weapons are prayer, vigilance, and the sacraments; our enemies are the devil, the world, and the flesh. We must fight with courage, and must never grow tired. Temptations meet us upon every side, and they must be treated as a besieging army trying to take a town by assault. Repulsed upon one side, it endeavors to scale the walls upon another. The besieged must be ever on their guard, and meet every attack with a constant resistance. The spiritual weapons with which we must engage in our spiritual warfare are—vigilance over ourselves, flight from occasions of sin, frequent prayer, recollection of the presence of God, and espe

cially confession and communion. Whoever uses these means is sure not to give way to temptation; whoever neglects them is equally sure to succumb to it.

4th. "Deliver us from evil." The greatest evil of all is sin, and eternal damnation, the punishment of sin. It is from this twofold evil that we ask deliverance every day. We may, indeed, ask to be delivered from sickness, from poverty, and from other temporal evils, but, as these afflictions are often just what we need the most, because of God's special designs in sending them, we must always add to our prayer for deliverance the words that Jesus Christ taught us Himself when, in His agony in the garden, He prayed, "Yet not My will, but Thine be done." God knows what we need far better than we can know, and when He sends us troubles it is in infinite mercy and goodness. Let us therefore ask our blessed Lord to deliver us from the terrible evil of hell and its eternal flames; from sin, from attachment to sin, and from all the vices which are its natural fruits.

The word AMEN, which is the ending of every Christian prayer, should be uttered with reverence and attention, since it expresses the ardent desire we have to be heard.

Let us, then, meditate on all these beautiful words, and strive earnestly to say the Lord's Prayer with greater recollection than hitherto. Fathers and mothers should teach their children to understand it, and impress upon their minds that it must not be said as a vain repetition and only with the lips, but that they must lift their hearts to God in faith and love, if they would have Him hear and bless them when they say, "Our Father."

THE AVE MARIA.

THE Ave Maria, or Angelical Salutation, is the most beautiful and popular of all the prayers which Christians address to the Blessed Virgin Mary. There is no little child who cannot say it, and when a mother first teaches her children to pray she always adds to the "Our Father," "Hail! Mary."

The whole prayer may be described as a tribute of love. Who, therefore, has composed it? The first part was spoken by the Archangel Gabriel, and the second part was added by the Holy Catholic Church.

Let us consider the occasion, the circumstances, and the time at which the angelical salutation was given to Christians.

Mary was at Nazareth, and was praying one day in a little grotto

which formed part of the humble home of Joseph, her espoused husband. It was the 25th of March. Suddenly Mary saw before her an Angel surrounded with light. "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee," said this messenger from God; "blessed art thou among women." And as the Blessed Virgin was troubled at this salutation, and wondered what it could mean, the Archangel added. "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus" (that is to say, Saviour). "He shall be called the Son of the Most High, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." And then Mary answered the Angel, "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" (The Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph had both made a vow of perpetual virginity.) But the angel said to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God, because no word shall be impossible with God." Then Mary answered "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word," and the angel disappeared. Thus the Immaculate Virgin became the Mother of God. And nine months after, on the 25th of December, in the stable at Bethlehem, she brought miraculously into the world Jesus, her Divine Son. If the first part of the Hail Mary came from heaven, so surely did the last; for it is in the name and by the power of God that the Catholic Church speaks unto men; and it was the Church, inspired by the Holy Ghost, who in the year 541 commanded that this simple and beautiful prayer should be added to the angelical salutation: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

The circumstances which occasioned this addition to be made were these: An archbishop of Constantinople named Nestorius having dared both in preaching and in writing to attack the divine maternity of the Blessed Virgin, many of the orthodox bishops appealed to the Pope, St. Celestine, and what his judgment was we may easily suppose. At first he tried with great forbearance to lead the heretic Nestorius back to the truth, by clearly demonstrating that, the divine nature and the human nature being united in Jesus Christ in one only Person, who was both God and man, and thus inseparably and at the same time the Son of God and the Son of Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ must be truly and necessarily the Mother of God. Nestorius was entirely indifferent to these efforts of the Pope, and he was therefore obliged to have recourse to more rigorous measures

He condemned Nestorius as a heretic and an abettor of heresy; he excommunicated him, degraded him from his ecclesiastical dignities, and convoked a general council of bishops to judge the guilty man. This council met at Ephesus in the year 451. The solemn assemblies were held in the ancient church of St. Mary, the first, it is said, ever erected to the honor of the Virgin Mother. Nothing could be more solemn than the meeting at which the Fathers judged Nestorius. From the dawn of day they consulted, the doors of the church being closed. An immense crowd collected outside. The night came, and the doors were still unopened. . . . At last the meeting ended; the bishops appeared upon the steps of the portico, three Papal legates at their head. One of them, St. Cyril of Alexandria, read and proclaimed the sentence in the midst of an unbroken silence: "Mary is truly the Mother of God. Whoever says otherwise is a heretic and excommunicated. Anathema to Nestorius!" Exclamations of joy rose upon all sides.

The bishops were led home in triumph, incense was burned, and the whole city was brilliantly illuminated. In remembrance of this great decision the Council of Ephesus commanded that the words "Holy Mary, Mother of God," etc., should be added to the angelical salutation.

Thus, for one blasphemy against the Blessed Virgin, innumerable praises have gone up to heaven during fourteen centuries, and God wonderfully brought good out of evil to the glory of His holy Name!

Nestorius, excommunicated and degraded like Judas from his episcopate, went into a desert to die, cursed by God and men. He died impenitent, and even while he lived, upon that sacrilegious tongue which had blasphemed the Mother of God a special curse descended in a very marked and terrible way.

Such is the origin of the Ave Maria. But in order that we may be moved to love this prayer, to say it often and attentively and with an ever-increasing fervor, let us reverently consider the words.

The salutation, *Ave*, is both an exclamation of love and a mark of reverence toward the Blessed Virgin; we should therefore say "Hail!" with love and confidence, because Mary is our good and tender Mother, the Refuge and Advocate of sinners, the Mother of mercy; and with the deepest veneration, because she is the most holy Queen of heaven and earth, and the glorious Mother of God.

In Hebrew the name of Mary signifies queen; it also signifies sea of bitterness and illuminatrix. The Blessed Virgin is indeed the Queen of angels, of saints, and of men; on Calvary she endured the

most bitter sorrow; and, lastly, she has given to the world Jesus Christ, the light of truth and holiness.

The Angel Gabriel did not pronounce the name of Mary, out of reverence for her who was to become the Mother of God. The church has added it, first, out of love for this sweet name; and, next, to show more clearly that the title "full of grace" could only be given to Mary. The words in the original are still more expressive than in the translation. They signify formed in grace; made, or innate with grace. Mary is perfectly and entirely in the grace of God, and without any stain of original or actual sin by the effects of which grace is destroyed. It is to this singular privilege of complete and perfect sanctity that she owes the title of Immaculate.

"The Lord is with thee." These words are given by God as a proof of the perfect union of the Creator with His creature. God the Father is with Mary as the bridegroom with his well-beloved spouse; God the Son is with her as a son is with his mother; God the Holy Ghost is with her as a king, in his palace, as a master in his own domains, as God in His own temple, as the soul is in the body and with the body.

"The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women." These words of the Archangel were also spoken to Mary by St. Elizabeth on the day of the Visitation. Mary is the one woman above all other women, and it was she of whom God spoke to Adam and Eve when, in promising a Saviour, He said that He would make a complete separation between the devil and her. Mary is the woman, expected for four thousand years, who was predestined to the ineffable glory of giving its divine Redeemer to the human race.

St. Elizabeth added, "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb." And the Church has added here the name of Jesus, so that there should be found in this prayer the three great names, God, Jesus, Mary: God, the Creator and Lord of all, and our own last end; Jesus, God made man, the Saviour of the world; Mary, the bond of union between heaven and earth.

He is blessed, the divine Son of Mary, for God has poured forth on Him without measure all grace and benediction; and not only is He blessed in Himself, but in Him all the nations of the earth are eternally blessed; He is for all the source of life and benediction, and there can be no blessing but through Him.

Holy Mary! Holy, indeed, and more than holy; for the Church bestows on her an honor far higher than that which is rendered to the Saints. She does not adore Mary; that would be a sacrilegious

idolatry; God alone, Jesus alone, may be adored. But the Blessed Virgin merits and receives from the Church a special worship, peculiar to herself, called hyperdulia, which means honor above all honor. Above Mary there is only Jesus Christ, only God. Below her, at an immense distance, are seraphim, cherubim, archangels, angels, and all the saints.

Mother of God! What a title, what glory! How great the power over the Sacred Heart of Jesus which His own Mother must possess! How good it is to ask her prayers! "A single look from her," said the great St. Bernard, "disarms the wrath of divine justice; and when she pleads in our favor the graces of the Almighty flow downward like a mighty river." Let us therefore say with perfect confidence, "O Mother of God, and our Mother, turn thine eyes of mercy toward us. Pray for us sinners! We do not deserve to be heard by our Father who is in heaven, but thou, His holy, His well-beloved Mother, thou wilt be heard; and the title we give thee most dear to thy heart is, "Refuge of Sinners."

Holy Mother, pray for us now, during the whole of our life on earth; pray for us at the moment of temptation. Obtain for us purity, humility, meekness, a lively faith, and final perseverance. Defend us from the devil, our enemy; guard us from sin to-day, to-morrow, at every instant of our life, and especially at the hour of our death. Amen. That is the decisive moment. It is upon that last hour that our whole eternity depends; it is then that we shall need especially the help of the Blessed Mother of God. Let us have confidence; she will not fail us then. At that supreme moment Mary will come to us if, during life, we have been faithful in asking her help. "Behold me, my child," she will say, "I am with thee; thou hast called me. How often hast thou said to me, Hail! full of grace. And now, my child, I greet thee, full of the grace of my divine Son, who is about to reward thee with eternal glory. Thou hast said to me, The Lord is with thee; He is with thee also, O my child! and thou shalt be with Him throughout the blissful ages of eternity. Thou hast blessed me, and hast blessed the Name of Jesus my Son; and I have blessed thee, and have accompanied thee all through life with constant benedictions; I have obtained for thee the grace of a happy death, and at this terrible moment I bless thee yet again. Have confidence, thy Mother is with thee; thou hast made me thy advocate and thy refuge. Poor sinner! thou hast done well to seek in my bosom an asylum against the justice of thy God! He has appointed me the Mother of mercy, and I have obtained mercy for

thee. Come, therefore, soul beloved of my Son, even now is that last hour of which thou hast spoken every time that thou hast prayed to me; I change for thee its terrors into a calm, sweet hope. Child of Mary, child of God, enter into the joy of thy Lord!"

Such is the Ave Maria. Happy he who hallows with this sweet prayer every action of his life! in this world he shall receive consolation, and in the next an eternal reward.

THE CREDO.

After the Pater and the Ave Maria, the Credo presents itself to all the children of the Church, as a necessary part of their morning and evening prayers. Repeated with devotion, it is the best and most solemn of all the acts of faith. The Ave Maria is the sweetest and most consoling of all the acts of hope; the Pater is the holiest and most sublime of all the acts of charity.

It is not sufficient to know these three prayers in English and to understand them perfectly, but it is also very necessary to be able to say them in Latin—the language in which the Church recites them every day throughout the whole world. In Catholic countries little children of six years old always say the Credo, as well as the Our Father, and the Hail Mary, in Latin. We can pray much better in Latin than in the vulgar tongue, since a special grace always accompanies the language of the Church. I will add that it is not difficult to learn these prayers in Latin; it can be done simply by reading them from a prayer-book for three or four weeks at your morning and evening prayers. Latin is the language of the Church because in the time of St. Peter and the Apostles it was the language of the whole world. The Church has preserved it from the beginning out of respect for the apostolical traditions. The Creed—composed by the Apostles before their separation, about twelve years after the Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord—briefly recalls the great mysteries of Christianity. And, first, it places before Christians the obligation they are under to believe, that is, to submit to the teaching of the Church, which is infallible, because it is the teaching of Jesus Christ Himself. To believe is to accept without doubting all that is taught by the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church. Then the Creed recalls the mystery of the existence of one only God—ineffable and supreme; a pure Spirit, eternal and infinite in all perfections—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Creator of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things, of the visible and invisible worlds. It briefly states the

great fundamental mystery of religion, and recalls how Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God—God Himself even as the Father is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, the true Son of God, and the true Son of Mary—became incarnate by the greatest of all miracles and by the power of the Holy Ghost, and thus united the divine nature and the human nature in one indivisible Person. It recalls that the Son of God desired to suffer and die to expiate the sins of men, and to satisfy in His innocent Person the justice of His Heavenly Father; that He died to give us life; that He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to prove His divinity; and that He will come again at the end of the world to judge all men, the evil and the good, the living and the dead. Then the Creed goes on to teach that the Holy Ghost has been sent by Jesus Christ to His Church, and assists and directs it in all things. In the Church and through the Church the Holy Spirit unites into one family all the Saints of heaven, of earth, and purgatory. He fights against sin, and saves repentant sinners by means of baptism and the other sacraments; He prepares us for the resurrection of the body, which shall take place on the day of the last judgment; and lastly, in the Name of Jesus Christ, and through the infinite love of the Father, He plants in the souls of the faithful the germ of the life everlasting.

Such is the Credo, the apostolic summary of the Christian faith. Such is the great and holy prayer which from the time of the Apostles has re-echoed throughout the earth, in one harmonious cry of salvation, adoration, faith, and love. Let this divine cry be often on our lips and in our hearts. It will strengthen the faith to which it gives so clear and unfaltering an utterance, and faith is the very foundation of the Christian life and of eternal salvation.

THE CONFITEOR.

If the Christian after his baptism became impeccable he would only need to worship God by faith and hope and love; but, unfortunately, in the midst of the temptations and combats of life he preserves the sad possibility of sin, and, being tempted, often falls Therefore it is not only right but absolutely necessary that he should daily make an act of contrition, united to the acts of faith, hope, and charity; that is to say, that he should humiliate himself for his sins, and speak sorrowful words of repentance to the God whom he has offended. And this is why we must always add the beautiful act of contrition expressed by the Confiteor to the acts of faith,

hope, and love expressed in our daily prayers by the Pater, Ave, and Credo.

The Confiteor is the fourth great Catholic prayer which the Church obliges her ministers to recite every day both in the Mass and in the Divine Office, and the value of which she urges upon all her children. Nothing could be more simple, more consoling, more sublime, than this prayer of Christian repentance. "I confess" means I acknowledge; indeed the first condition, and also the first sign, of true repentance is the sincere acknowledgment of sin committed. If there is no acknowledgment, there is no humility; if there is no humility, there is no repentance; if there is no repentance, there is no pardon; and we might add, if there is no pardon, there is no salvation; for we are all, without any exception, sinners, and the holiest Saints (the Blessed Virgin alone excepted) are only sinners pardoned and purified.

It is to Almighty God that we must first of all confess our misery; for it is He whom we have offended by sin. He is God, that is, infinite goodness and infinite holiness; He is Almighty in His goodness; therefore if we repent with our whole hearts, we have reason to hope everything from His fatherly compassion.

We do not say, "I confess to my Saviour Jesus Christ," for a very deep and consoling reason. It is because Jesus Christ Himself, the Victim of our sins, asks forgiveness with us, for us, and in us from God His Father and our Father. Our repentance only reaches God and obtains pardon when it is united to the sorrow and the suffering of the Sacred Heart for sin. Jesus is within us, praying with us, obtaining mercy for us, and giving to our prayer and our repentance the merits of His Passion and of His own all-powerful prayers. In reciting the Confiteor, and at all times when asking God to forgive our sins, we must unite ourselves closely to our dear Lord, who, though He knew no sin, made Himself sin for us, and bore our sins in His own body upon the tree, that we all might gain access to God.

"I confess . . . to Blessed Mary ever Virgin." We confess our sins to the Blessed Virgin because she is the Refuge of sinners, the Health of the weak, the Gate of heaven, the Mother of mercy, the Advocate and Help of Christians. The gentle, loving Virgin Mother pities poor sinners as a mother pities her sick child; she prays for them, and her powerful prayer obtains for them at all times, but in our own days more especially, miraculous graces, innumerable graces of pardon and repentance.

We also ask St. Michael the Archangel to help us and pray for us,

because he is the great conqueror of Satan and the glorious champion of the heavenly hosts. St. Michael can powerfully help us to overcome the sin which is in us, since it is the work of his adversary, and if unconquered will drag us down when life is ended to the depths of hell, and there unite us forever to the devils whose rebellion we have shared. For what is a devil but a sinner, a lost and impenitent sinner?

And next we confess our sins, our falls, our lamentable weakness to St. John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and lastly to all the Saints, because all the Saints, and especially St. John the Baptist and St. Peter and St. Paul, can assist us and obtain for us the pardon we desire. St. John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus Christ, will prepare in our hearts the way of the Lord. St. Peter, who holds the keys of the kingdom of heaven, will obtain for us the grace of being loosed from our sins. St. Paul, the great Apostle of Jesus, will save us by his prayers, as he formerly saved the sinning Gentile nations by the zeal of his preaching and by the blood of his martyrdom.

When we confess our sins at the tribunal of penance, at the feet of the priest who is the depositary of the keys of the Church and of the divine pardon, we add "and to you, father." The priest by pardoning our sins in the name of God restores life to our soul, and thus becomes truly our spiritual father. For what is a father but the instrument ordained by the all-powerful goodness of God to give life to a creature? The Church is our true mother by baptism and the other sacraments; her minister, the Catholic priest, is our true spiritual father, the true father of our souls. Absolution is a resurrection as real as that of Lazarus. In the Sacrament of Penance we are obliged to confess our sins in detail to the priest, because Our Lord has willed it so. He only pardons us on this condition, as we fully explained when speaking of Confession.

What do we confess to God, to the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints? That we "have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed." These three accusations comprehend all the sins a man can commit in this world. We add, striking the breast three times as a sign of penitence, "through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault." The Church thus impresses upon us that we must not seek to excuse our sins by any vain pleas, but must fully recognize them, and must humiliate ourselves willingly and with our whole hearts. And then we ask the Blessed Virgin and the Saints (and in confession the priest) to pray to the Lord our God for us

Pardon follows the humble confession of our sins, and the Church, who knows the loving mercy of God, teaches us to say, "May Almighty God have mercy on us, and forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life! May the almighty and merciful God grant us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins! Amen."

Every Christian should know the Confiteor in Latin as well as in English. When he commits any sin he may recite it with much fruit, and he should never omit it from his morning and evening prayers.

THE ROSARY.

It was an ancient custom in the East to offer crowns of roses to distinguished persons, and the early Christians loved to honor in this way the images of the Blessed Virgin and the relics of the martyrs.

An illustrious bishop, St. Gregory of Naziazum, full of devotion toward the Mother of God, was inspired to substitute for the material crown of roses a spiritual crown of prayers, persuaded that it would be more acceptable to the Blessed Queen of the Church. With this idea he composed a long series or crown of prayers, which comprehended the most glorious titles, the sweetest praises, and the most excellent prerogatives of Mary. In the seventh century St. Bridget, one of the patron Saints of Ireland, brought this pious thought to a greater perfection. She made the devotion introduced by St. Gregory available to all by substituting for the beautiful prayers he had composed the most popular and still more beautiful prayers of the Creed, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary. And in order to know by some material indication how many prayers had been recited, she adopted the custom of the Anchorites of Thebaid, and threaded beads of wood or stone in the form of a crown. Rosary signifies crown of roses; and the prayers we daily recite form a wreath of spiritual roses with which in love we crown our Mother and our Queen.

The word chaplet means little crown. The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin is composed of five decades, each of which consists of ten Hail Marys, preceded by one Our Father. St. Dominic, one of the greatest Saints of Christianity, and one of the most devoted servants of the Blessed Virgin, was specially instructed in this devotion by the Mother of God herself.

In saying the Rosary we repeat the Hail Mary more often than the Our Father, not, as has been said, because we honor the Blessed Virgin more than God, but because, being a devotion instituted in her honor, it is quite natural that the prayers it contains should be

THE HOLY ROSARY.

Queen of the Holy Rosary

The Joyful Mysteries

Descending from the throne of God,
A bright archangel flies;
To Mary's lowly home he brings
A message from the skies.
She hears an angel's lips that night
The first "Hail Mary" say;
O Mother, think of this when we
Repeat his words to-day.

Now Mary wends her way with haste
The rugged roads along;
In answer to her cousin's words
She sings her glorious song.
The unborn infant leaps with joy
When Mary's voice he hears;
O Mother, may that voice of thine
Be ever in our ears.

See troops of shining angels crowd
Around the homely shed
Where Jesus lies on Mary's knees
And shepherds softly tread;
And kings from distant lands adore,
Thy Infant God, whose star
Has led them to His sacred feet
From eastern realms afar.

In Simeon's arms behold the Babe,
Who rules both earth and skies!
On Mary's Child, his promised Lord,
He rests his aged eyes.
He long had waited, long had prayed,
This blissful day to see;
And now he asks to go in peace
Where Jesus soon will be.

O Mother, dry those bitter tears!
O Mother, grieve no more!
Thy Child, thy Jesus is not lost,
That weary search is o'er:
To do His Father's work, He chose
Among the scribes to be;
But now returns to dwell for years
With Joseph and with thee.

The Sorrowful Mysteries

O come unto the Olive Grove,
And see where Jesus kneels:
The anguish of His Sacred Heart
A sweat of blood reveals.
To comfort Christ an angel came,
And brought his God relief;
We too, by love and prayer, may try
To soothe His bitter grief.

Now watch with tearful eyes the stripes,
The cruel blows which fall
On Jesus, as He stands fast bound
In Pilate's judgment hall.
Those stripes, that shame my sins deserve;
Why fall they, Lord, on Thee?
Thy love, my God, Thy too great love
Would bear them all for me.

Behold how Jews and soldiers weave
For Christ a thorny crown;
And, bending on one knee in jest,
Before His face bow down.

My Jesus, for each piercing thorn,
For every jest and smart,
We still will make fresh acts of love,
To soothe Thy Sacred Heart.

With Mary now we follow Christ;
He mounts the hill of woe,
And bears His heavy cross along
With fainting steps and slow.
Can we relieve His weary limbs,
Or ease His racking pain?
O yes, if we will show Him now
He did not die in vain!

My God, they nail Thy hands and feet,
They pierce Thy sacred side;
The last drop of Thy blood is shed,
And Thou for man hast died.
O, can we wish to sin again,
And act a traitor's part
To Him who loved us with a love
Which broke His Sacred Heart?

The Glorious Mysteries

The day of days has dawned at last,
And white-robed angels say
The Lord has left His cold dark grave,
The stone is rolled away.
O Mary Magdalene, be glad!
O loving saint, rejoice!
Though blinded by your tears, you know
Your risen Master's voice.

And now the friends have come
With wistful yearning eyes,
To gaze on their dear Saviour's form
Ascending to the skies.
He mounts in robes of light arrayed;
And Mary stays behind
For fifteen years to teach them all
That upward path to find.

A faithful band have gathered round
Their Lord's own Mother dear,
A mighty rushing wind is heard—
The Paraclete is near.
Lo! fiery tongues are resting now
On every sainted head,
And since on every Christian soul
The Spirit's light is shed.

Behold that open grave, adorned
With blossoms fair and bright,
And saints who mourned for Mary
Stand enraptured with the sight.
They find her spotless body gone,
Sweet roses in its place;
Assumed on high, she leaves this world
To get and give us grace.

To welcome Mary, Queen of saints,
See countless angels throng;
A glad "Hail Mary" rends the skies,
An anthem loud and long.
See Jesus crowns His Mother dear
With rays of purest light,
And saints and angels kneel and own
That Maiden Mother's might.

specially addressed to her. Everything in its time we might answer. The Rosary is not, as some unusually enlightened minds conceive, a devotion good for women. First, I do not see in what men so greatly surpass women, either as regards the intellect, or, still more, as regards the heart. In many cases women are superior to men. And so the saying, "Good for women!" is worth nothing. And what is there in the chaplet that is not good for every one? Is it the Our Father which is not good enough for men? Was not Our Lord speaking to His own Apostles when He taught them this beautiful prayer? Or is it the Hail Mary which is beneath the mind of men? or the Creed at the beginning? or is it the sign of the Cross?

The greatest men of modern times have recited the Rosary with as much devotion as the simple women whom some, with remarkably advanced understandings, appear to disdain. St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis Xavier, St. Vincent de Paul, Bossuet, and Fénélon are among the great number of those who have offered to the Blessed Virgin this daily tribute of praise. St. Francis de Sales made a vow to recite the Rosary every day. It must be a strange kind of pride which can despise a prayer so honored by such men as these.

The principal mysteries of our redemption, fifteen in number, are celebrated in this devotion; and the right way in which to recite the Rosary is to meditate during each decade on one of the mysteries in the life of Our Saviour, or His Holy Mother, and to ask God through the intercession of Mary for some virtue which we need, or which shines out more especially in the mystery we contemplate; or we may recite each decade for a special intention, to obtain some grace from God, the conversion of a friend, of a father, a mother, a child, for the cure of some disease, the success of some undertaking, or, in case of failure, for patience and resignation.

A faithful daily recitation of the Rosary is sure to prove a great source of happiness.

A preacher of the last century was one day called in to hear the confession of a young man who had been seized by apoplexy. He found him quite unconscious, and left in order to offer up for the dying man a votive mass of the Blessed Virgin. He had scarcely ended when a servant came to tell him that his master was able to speak. What was the surprise of the priest when, on reaching his new penitent, he found him penetrated with feelings of the deepest repentance, and offering his life to God in expiation for his sins! Profiting by these happy dispositions, he received his confession and

administered the last sacraments. Not knowing to what his conversion was to be attributed, he questioned him as to the cause. "Father," he answered, "I can only attribute this grace to the fervor of your prayers and to those of my dear mother. When she was dying, she called me, and, speaking to me of the dangers by which my youth would be surrounded, she said, 'My only consolation, my son, is that I leave you under the protection of the Blessed Virgin; promise me to say the Rosary every day.' I promised, and I acknowledge that for ten years this has been the only religious act which I have practised." On hearing this the confessor recognized the visible protection of the Blessed Virgin, which was clearly manifested in this most consoling death-bed, nor ceased until the sick man had breathed his last sigh.

THE MASS.

Of all the points of Christian doctrine there is perhaps not one which it is more necessary to know, yet of which many are more ignorant, than that of which we must now speak. The practice of it is so frequent, and the fruits to be drawn from it are, if rightly appreciated, so abundant, that it may be called the soul of Christianity, the centre and abridgement of the Christian faith.

I mean the Mass.

The Mass is not a prayer like other prayers. Some think that vespers or some other devotion may well fill the place of Mass, but this is a great error; the service of vespers forms a very excellent religious exercise, but vespers are only prayers. The Mass is indeed a prayer, but it is something higher still; it is a sacrifice, and what a sacrifice! A sacrifice in which God renders Himself present to His people! A sacrifice in which God Himself descends upon the altar as the victim!

A sacrifice is the most holy act in the worship of the one true God; it is an offering made to God of the life of a victim, as an acknowledgment that He is the sovereign Lord of every creature He has made. The more excellent the victim the more acceptable the sacrifice, since it draws its value from the victim which is immolated.

Let us judge from this the infinite holiness of the sacrifice of the Cross, in which Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of the living God, the Second Person of the Adorable Trinity made man, offered His own life to God His Father, to render Him a homage that is worthy of Him, that is to say, infinite, and to atone by an expiation equally

infinite for the sins of the whole world. Can anything greater or more perfect be conceived? And this infinite greatness, and infinite perfection, are to be found in the holy sacrifice of the Mass; for it is the same divine sacrifice of Jesus Christ continuously offered throughout all ages.

Truly present, though invisible, in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, Jesus Christ by His Almighty power changes the bread and wine beneath the hands of His priests into His own body and blood; and there on the altar, at the sacred moment of the consecration, He offers Himself anew as the one universal all-sufficient Victim in the presence of God His Father; He renews the act of voluntary oblation which gave to His Passion and death upon the Cross all their infinite value; and thus immolating Himself anew, though without the shedding of His precious blood, He renders present to all human generations the one sacrifice which saved the world.

Therefore, the sacrifice of the Cross and the sacrifice of the Mass are not two sacrifices, but one only sacrifice, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ Himself offered simply under two different forms. On the cross and on the altar the Victim is the same, Jesus Christ; and this one Victim offers Himself to the same God with the same intentions. The appearance, the outward form alone, is distinct. The most solemn moment of the Mass is, therefore, the moment of the consecration or elevation.

The bell is rung that all may be aware of the presence of Our Lord. Every one must be kneeling, with bowed head, to adore in deepest reverence the majesty of Jesus Christ, and in union with Him to render all the praise, love, adoration, and thanksgiving which God expects from His creatures. We must also ask pardon for our sins, and make known our spiritual and temporal needs, uniting ourselves to this most holy Victim, for whose sake alone God deigns to hear our prayers.

It would be a great irreverence to remain seated or standing (without necessity) during the elevation; or, still more, to speak or laugh or look about; even the least noise must be avoided during these precious instants. Anything approaching to indifference at this solemn moment would show a sad want of religion. If we had a lively faith, we should be wholly penetrated and absorbed in the presence of the God who loves us to such a marvellous excess. All in the Mass which precedes the consecration is only the preparation for the sacred moment of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and all which follows is only the completion and the act of thanksgiving.

Nothing could be more solemn than all of these ceremonies. The greater part come down to us from the earliest ages.

In the first and second centuries, the sacred mysteries commenced, as now, by the singing of psalms and by prayers, which the priest recited aloud, and to which the faithful answered Amen. On the altar, which was usually raised above the relics of some martyr, were placed candles or lighted lamps. Incense was burned. The priest turned to the faithful then, as now, with the *Dominus vobiscum*. Then they read the letters (or epistles) of the Apostles or some passage by the Prophets of the Old Testament. Every one stood during the reading of the Gospel, which the priest or celebrant bishop explained in a homily or exhortation. After this the Credo was recited, and next the bread, wine, wax, and oil necessary for the sacrifice and worship were offered to the priest. Before the consecration of the Host and of the Chalice, the priest sang the prayer called the Preface (viz., the prayer which precedes); and a little after the consecration the Pater, absolutely the same as in our own days. Before Communion the kiss of peace was given; then followed a thanksgiving; the priest gave the benediction with the sign of the Cross, and the communicants retired from the altar bearing in their hearts their Lord and their God. It is a great mistake to pretend that the Mass is a modern institution. It was Our Lord Himself who first offered the sacrifice of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday at the Last Supper, when His Passion was about to begin. And from that time apostles, bishops, and priests have said Mass everywhere and always.

Christians are obliged to hear Mass on Sundays and Feasts of obligation, and no one who is able to do so on the week-days should fail to fulfil this most important duty. No other religious practice can be compared to this. How many might find time to go each morning to receive the benediction of Jesus Christ, and yet deprive themselves, from negligence, of graces which would render the day that followed holy and happy, and would sanctify their lives!

THE CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH.

In all times religion has made use of outward ceremonies through which to express by visible signs those sentiments of adoration, thanksgiving, and praise which spring up beneath her holy influence in the heart of man brought face to face with his Creator.

When these feelings cease to be concentrated in the depths of the heart, when they find outward utterance and become visible to the

eyes of men, they are subjected to certain forms or ceremonies which constitute the public worship of the children of God.

We may say that religious ceremonials, considered in their widest sense, have not only come down to us from the time of the Apostles, but from the very cradle of the human race.

We read in the Sacred Writings that God, after creation, blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; that is to say, that He set it exclusively apart for His own worship, teaching to Adam, our first father, who was by adoption the child of God, the manner in which this day must be employed. This primitive form of divine worship, outwardly rendered to the Lord, was gradually developed, by the command of God Himself, into the Jewish religion; and Moses, the great prophet of the ancient law, received upon Mount Sinai, in the midst of thunder and lightning, those ceremonial laws which he transmitted to the people of God.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, having come into the world to teach men to adore God in spirit and in truth, did not for that reason suppress the outward ceremonies of the ancient law. He not only preserved many, but He also instituted new ones, and He left the Holy Spirit to His Church in order that His divine work might be preserved and developed throughout succeeding ages.

And thus from the very origin of Christianity we see the Apostles making their regulations with regard to divine worship, celebrating religious assemblies, consecrating certain edifices for Christian meetings, celebrating the sacrifice of the Mass, etc., and St. Paul reminds the faithful of Corinth that he received from Jesus Christ Himself all that he prescribes to them touching the sacrifice and the Communion of the Holy Eucharist.

The Apostles, who remained together at Jerusalem for many years after the resurrection and ascension of Our Lord, celebrated together the divine offices, and gave themselves "continually to prayer and the ministry of the word," as St. Luke relates in the Acts of the Apostles. After their dispersion into different parts of the world for the preaching of the Gospel, they initiated the Christian societies, which they formed in different nations, in the same true faith, the same Christian morality, and the same divine worship.

Thus, notwithstanding the difference of languages and customs, we find, throughout the whole Catholic world, that all sacred ceremonies are everywhere substantially the same. And in the Holy Sacrifice, which is the centre of Christian worship, we see all the most important parts unchanged—viz., the sign of the Cross, the

recitation or singing of the Psalms, the reading of the inspired writings of the Old and New Testaments, principally from the holy Gospels; the instruction or sermon which followed on Sundays and Feast-days; the offering of bread and wine, the elements of the Eucharist; the Preface or preparation for the solemn moment of consecration; the consecration of the Holy Eucharist, by the bishop or priest, by means of the words spoken by Our Lord at the Last Supper. And, both before and after, the prayer for the living and the dead; the Lord's Prayer, followed by the kiss of peace; the Communion; the thanksgiving; the benediction of the priest; the use of certain vestments, and the observance of certain rites,—in one word, the foundation is everywhere the same and the differences are most trifling. The origin of these differences may be easily explained by the necessity the Apostles and their first successors found of conforming to the different habits and customs of various nationalities, and thus propagating the kingdom of Jesus Christ. And next came the modifications brought about by time, and authorized by the authority of the Pontiffs, to whom Jesus Christ, the Son of God, promised His assistance, even unto the end of the world, and whom He charged with the direction of all that relates to the preservation of the faith, the maintenance of Christian morality, and the majesty of divine worship.

The ceremonies and ancient formulas of prayers, many of which come down from apostolic times and from the first ages of the Church, are preserved in certain books, the integrity of which is guarded by the popes and bishops, and which are called the Missal, the Ritual or Sacramentary, the Breviary, and the Ceremonial.

In the chapters which follow we propose to explain briefly the principal religious ceremonies of the Church, and shall speak particularly of the churches, the ceremonies of the Mass, the vestments, and sacred vessels, and, lastly, of the evening services, such as Vespers, Compline, and Benediction. We shall see by this simple explanation how ill-founded are the prejudices which exist against the Catholic faith, which necessarily appears the more holy, the more perfect, and the more worthy of God and men in proportion as it becomes more clearly understood. "A little knowledge drives away religion," said the celebrated English philosopher, Lord Bacon, "and a true and profound knowledge restores faith and confirms the Christian."

THE CHURCHES.

We have seen the importance and necessity of an outward ceremonial in divine worship. We have seen that since man is not a pure spirit, but has a body as well as a soul, it is quite natural that religion should strive to enlist both in the service of the one true God, and by means of the senses of the body should plant within the soul the sentiments of faith, reverence, and religious adoration which strengthen and build up the Christian life and character.

Those religious sects which almost entirely reject the use of sacred ceremonies prove by this fact alone that their religion does not come from Him who has made us what we are, and thus, under pretext of improving and reforming the Catholic faith, they have deformed everything and have ruined many souls. But, in order that the true object of religious ceremonies should be fulfilled, it is necessary that they should be understood. We shall, therefore, commence by a general explanation of churches and sacred things, and shall afterward explain more minutely the ceremonies of the Mass, of Vespers, Benediction, etc.

By the word church two very distinct things are understood: 1. The union of all the faithful who serve God, and form upon earth the great and holy family of Our Father in heaven; and in this sense the word means a society, and not a house of prayer. 2. We call by the name of church the building in which Christians gather together for the worship of God, the house in which they meet thus taking the name of those who meet there. Our churches are consecrated, blessed, and are expressly forbidden to be used for anything but divine worship. They represent in a striking manner the living Church of which we have spoken. The stones of which they are built signify the immense number of Christians whose perfect union forms the Catholic Church, and the pillars or columns which sustain the edifice are an image of the bishops and pastors charged to sustain and uphold the spiritual edifice of the faith. And even as the walls and columns all rest upon the pavement of the temple, upon the basis, upon the foundation, the faithful and the bishops all rest upon the Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the chief and sole foundation of the holy Church of God. The basis of our churches, therefore, represents the Sovereign Pontiff, upon whom everything within the Church rests: faith, doctrine, discipline, etc.

In the second place, even as the Church is composed of the Saints,

who are already in heaven, of Christians still fighting upon earth, and of the holy souls who are awaiting their deliverance in purgatory; so the material churches are composed of the choir, where we may see in the priests (as we shall presently explain) a figure of the Saints and Angels; of the nave, filled by the faithful servants and soldiers of Jesus Christ; and lastly of the churchyards, where the bodies of departed Christians repose, and which should be, in accordance with the true spirit of the liturgy, under the pavement of the temples, or at least within the shadow of their walls.

There exists one other striking resemblance between the living Church and the buildings in which we worship God. For even as in the first Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, is the centre and principle of all the glory of the Saints and Angels in heaven, of the holiness of Christians upon earth, of the hope of the souls in purgatory; so in our churches all Catholic worship and Catholic devotion centres round the Blessed Sacrament, where the same Jesus ever dwells, present in His own divine Person on our altars, to be the one sacred object of our adoration and our Mediator with God.

Churches are usually surmounted by a high spire, at the summit of which shines the Cross, the holy symbol of Christianity. Sometimes we see the image of a cock, signifying the vigilance with which God should be served. In the steeple are the bells which, with their soft chimes, summon the faithful to prayer. For fourteen centuries bells have been used in the Christian Church. This custom was established by St. Paulinus, a holy bishop of Nole in Italy. Until that time Christians had been summoned to their meetings by less convenient and less efficacious means, such as trumpets, rattles, and even the human voice.

It is said that bells are baptized, but that means simply blessed, so as to set them apart for their holy use.

We might give many more interesting details with regard to the form and exterior of our churches, but we only desire to call the attention of the reader to the most essential points.

THE ALTARS AND SACRED VESSELS.

THE holiest part of the church is the altar, where the sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated. The altar is so called from the Latin word *altus*, high, because it ought to be raised by three steps, or at least by one, above the pavement of the church. This elevation of the altars signifies the holiness of the sacrifices and prayers which,

offered by the priest in the name of the people, ascend from thence to heaven. There ought always to be a crucifix and several candles upon the altar, and beneath it are the relics, placed there by the bishops when it is consecrated. It is covered with three white cloths, without which it is forbidden to celebrate the Mass.

Altars are principally intended for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and for all that in any way relates to the Blessed Sacrament of the adorable Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

The three white cloths signify the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity, at the same time inseparable and distinct. It is forbidden, because of the holiness of the altars, to place anything upon them not necessary for the celebration of the Mass.

The crucifix, always placed in the middle of the altar, and without which Mass may not be said, is intended to remind the priest and the faithful that the sacrifice of the Mass is the same as that of the Cross, in which Jesus Christ so loved the world as to give His life a redemption for many. On each side of the crucifix wax candles must be lighted, two when a priest not a bishop says Mass, but four when it is a bishop. These candles signify Jesus Christ, the true Light of the world, to which He gives both life and light by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The lamp, which burns night and day before the Blessed Sacrament, is a symbol of the same mystery. In the great churches of Rome there are seven lamps before the tabernacle instead of one, symbolizing the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, of which Jesus Christ is the first principle.

In the worship of the Holy Eucharist the Church uses, principally, three different kinds of sacred vessels—the ciborium, in which the Blessed Sacrament is preserved, and which remains in the tabernacle; the chalice, which is used to celebrate the Mass; and, lastly, the monstrance, in which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for solemn benedictions and processions.

It is needless to remark on the sanctity of these sacred vessels, especially of the chalice. In all times, even during the cruel persecutions of the earliest ages of the Church, Christians have most religiously provided for their costliness and magnificence. They were often made of gold or massive silver, richly chased, and set with precious stones. We still try to render them as worthy as possible of that hallowed purpose for which they are intended, and the part of these vessels which touches the Blessed Sacrament must always be covered with gold. Gold, from its excellence, is the sym-

bol of charity; and silver, from its whiteness, is the symbol of innocence and purity.

Besides the three altar cloths of which we have spoken, and which a bishop only has the right to bless, many other sacred linen cloths are used for the celebration of the Mass. The most worthy of veneration is the corporal, so called from the Latin *corpus*, because the Sacred Body of Jesus Christ rests immediately upon it during the Holy Sacrifice. In the tabernacle there is always a corporal under the ciborium, and also under the monstrance in Benediction. The linen cloth placed over the chalice, and intended to wipe it and to purify it, is called a purificator. Only ecclesiastics are permitted to touch these sacred vessels and corporals, because of the reverence which must be paid to everything connected with the Holy Eucharist.

EXPLANATION OF THE CEREMONIES OF THE MASS.

The Sacred Vestments.

In the early ages of Christianity bishops and priests, when celebrating divine worship, did not wear vestments of a different shape from the dress which was commonly worn. But it is certain that even in the time of the Apostles very rich materials, often embroidered in gold and silver, were worn at the altar in order to add to the majesty of the sacred mysteries.

When the Church, after the persecutions were over, counted among her children the Roman emperors, and the great and noble of the earth, she surrounded the worship of God with a splendor until then unknown; and her ministers, out of reverence for the Holy Sacrifice, were vested for the altar in magnificent robes of gold, of silver, and of silk. The shape of these antique vestments has been preserved up to the present time, with the exception of some trifling alterations. Formerly they consisted principally of a long white robe, with a stole or band of purple worn round the neck, and falling in front to the feet; of a large rich vestment over the white robe, called a chasuble; and, lastly, of a golden circlet round the head. To these vestments the Church has added, during the centuries, the girdle which draws in the folds of the white robe called an alb, and the maniple, or embroidered band, which the priest wears on the left arm during the celebration of the Mass; for bishops the golden circlet has been replaced by the mitre, which represents the divine royalty of Jesus Christ.

From the beginning up to the fifth or sixth century all the vestments were white. White was worn by the Roman nobility, and has always been regarded as a perfect symbol of holiness and innocence. But for the last six or seven hundred years a diversity of colors has been generally established, white, red, green, violet, and black, which we still see used in the liturgy. The Church desires thus to represent, as far as possible, the mysteries which she honors.

The ancient usage of white vestments is now reserved for the feasts of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Virgin, and of Saints not martyrs. Red vestments are used for the feasts of martyrs who have gained heaven by shedding their blood for Jesus Christ; they are also worn in the Masses of the Holy Ghost, because He manifested Himself on the day of Pentecost under the form of tongues of fire; and also to celebrate the memory of the Sacred Passion of Our Lord and the shedding of His precious blood. Green, which is little used, is the symbol of hope. Lastly, violet and black, colors of sadness and emblems of mortification, are used in all penitential seasons, principally in Advent and Lent. The vestments must be blessed by a bishop or by a priest who has been duly authorized.

The long cassock—black for priests, violet for bishops, red for cardinals, and white for the Pope—is not a sacred habit, but simply a special garment intended to distinguish ecclesiastics from other men, and to remind them constantly that their lives should be far removed from the thoughtlessness and indifference of those who are in the world. The difference of colors marks the difference of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Over the cassock, priests, when exercising the functions of the holy ministry, wear a white garment with wide sleeves called a surplice. By its whiteness it signifies the sanctity of Jesus Christ, with which the priest should be clothed as with a garment; for he is the angel or messenger of the earth, sent by God to sanctify his brethren and point out to them the way to heaven.

The rochet is a short surplice with narrow sleeves reaching to the knees, worn only by bishops and prelates, and which may not take the place of the surplice in the administration of Sacraments and the offices of the Church.

In saying Mass a priest does not wear the surplice but the alb (Latin, *albus*), a long white robe, which represents the white garment with which Our Lord was vested by Herod. This is drawn in by a white cord, an ancient custom which signified among the Romans gravity and morality, purity and chastity. Upon the left

arm is worn the maniple (Latin, *manus*), which was originally a cloth intended for wiping, if required, the hands and face; it signifies patient endurance of the ills of life.

The fourth sacerdotal vestment is the stole (Latin, *stola*). Placed over the shoulders of the priest, it signifies the yoke of Jesus Christ, and crossed upon his breast it reminds him that, in order to bear this divine yoke aright, he must carry his cross day by day, must renounce the evil inclinations of nature, and die to the world, to the flesh, and to sin.

The girdle, maniple, and stole represent the cords and bands with which Our Lord was bound in the various stages of His Passion.

And, lastly, the priest is vested in the chasuble, which, by covering all the rest, represents the virtue of charity, and the perfection of sanctity which is required to offer worthily the Holy Sacrifice. A cross is embroidered both upon the back and in the front of the chasuble, in front to remind the priest that he must imitate Jesus Christ crucified; at the back, to recall this same obligation to the faithful who assist at the Mass; in the front, because the priest offers the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of his own sins; at the back, because he must also pray and do penance for the sins of his brethren. The chasuble also represents the purple garment with which Our Lord was clothed as a mock king, and the cross upon it calls to mind the cross He bore upon His sacred shoulders.

The cope is a species of mantle used for Benediction, processions, and other solemn functions. Formerly it was a capuchin (French, *capuce*), or large cloak with a hood, worn by ecclesiastics for religious ceremonies in the open air. It was a protection from the rain and dust. But for a long time the hood has no longer been used; it has changed its shape, and has become a simple vestment ornamented with fringe and embroidery.

Finally, the priest's tonsure, or crown, is to represent the crown of thorns which our Saviour wore.

CEREMONIES OF THE MASS.

From the Commencement to the Epistle.

The Mass is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ Our Lord, offered, not upon Calvary with the shedding of His precious Blood, but by the ministry of His priests, under the appearances of bread and wine.

The sacrifice of the Mass and that of the Cross are not two sacri

fices, but one and the same sacrifice, of which the Victim is the same, and which the Son of God offers to His Father with the same intentions. Only the outward appearances are different, so that between the sacrifice of Calvary and that of the altar there is no essential difference.

The ceremonies of the Mass are acts of religion, and certain mysterious signs which the Church employs in the celebration of this adorable sacrifice to add to its solemnity, and to increase the fervor of the faithful.

The Mass consists of three principal parts—1. The preparation for the sacrifice; 2. the sacrifice properly so called; 3. the Communion and acts of thanksgiving.

The preparation begins with the sign of the Cross, which the priest makes on himself when reaching the altar at the foot of the steps, and it lasts until the consecration.

The sacrifice properly so called consists in the consecration of the bread and wine into the sacred Body and most precious Blood of Our Lord.

The third part includes the thanksgiving and prayers after the consecration until the last Gospel.

The preparation for the sacrifice may be again divided into four distinct parts—1. The prayers which the priest and the acolyte (who answers in the name of the congregation) recite at the foot of the altar, and at the altar itself until the Epistle; 2. the instructions and profession of faith contained in the Epistle, the Gospel, and the Creed; 3. the oblation and sanctification of the bread and wine intended to be consecrated; 4. lastly, the solemn invocation and the secret prayers of the Canon, which immediately precede the consecration of the Holy Eucharist.

The priest and the acolyte commence by making the sign of the Cross, thus showing that the action which they are about to perform is no other than the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Both kneeling or bowing down, represent by this attitude of humility the reverence due to the Majesty of God, and the humiliations of Jesus in the sacred mysteries of the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the Holy Eucharist. During these prayers, and especially during the Confiteor, both the priest and the faithful should excite in themselves a deep contrition for their sins, which have been the true cause of the sufferings and Passion of their Saviour. They should recall His sorrowful prayer in the Garden of Olives, when, prostrate on the ground, He asked pardon for sinners, and offered Himself to His

Father as the universal Victim of expiation. It is with such memories as these, and in union with Jesus, suffering and dying, that we should humiliate ourselves at the beginning of the Mass.

The priest goes up the steps to the altar as Jesus Christ, whom he represents, the Mediator between God and man; he commences by kissing the altar, asking God, through the merits of the Saints whose relics rest beneath it, to grant to all the pardon of their sins. The priest kisses the altar seven times during the Mass, and turns to the faithful seven times with the holy greeting, Dominus Vobiscum! ("The Lord be with you"). This mysterious number expresses the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, of which Jesus Christ is the only source, and which He communicates to the world by the merits of His sacrifice, and applies by the ministry of His priests.

Having gone up to the altar, the priest now goes to the left side (to the right of the spectator it is true, but to the left of the crucifix and tabernacle, the principal objects in the Church). A deep meaning is hidden beneath these different stations of the priest, whether in the middle of the altar, at the left, or at the right side. The left side represents the ancient alliance of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the law of Moses, from the creation of the world to the coming of the Saviour. The right side, the most worthy and the most noble, represents the law of grace and the new dispensation, from the coming of Jesus Christ to the conversion of the Jews, which shall take place in the last ages of the world.

During the greater part of the Mass, the priest, the living symbol of Jesus Christ, stands in the middle of the altar, and thus expresses that the Son of God made Man is the centre at which the old and the new dispensations unite.

The first prayer which he recites is called the Introit, viz., commencement. In this the Church expresses in a general way the object of the feasts which are celebrated during the course of the year. Then he returns to the middle of the altar and recites the Kyrie Eleison, which is composed of three invocations to each of the Adorable Persons of the Blessed Trinity. *Eleison* is a Greek word signifying have mercy.

Then comes the Gloria in Excelsis, a hymn of joy and triumph, which is only recited on feast-days and times of rejoicing. The first words of this magnificent hymn were spoken by the angels of heaven on the birth of the Saviour. The rest, composed fifteen hundred years ago by the great French Bishop, St. Hilary of Poictiers, is the development of the glorious exordium. In reciting it we

should unite ourselves both to the celebrant and to the angels who assist invisibly at the altar, and thus render to God the glory which is due to Him.

The priest then turns to the people with the Dominus Vobiscum, having first kissed the altar in order to express that he is about to draw from the very bosom of God the benedictions which it is his mission to shed over the earth. He next recites the prayer called the Collect, viz., union, because it is made in the name of all the faithful, and contains the substance of all petitions The Church always concludes it by the invocation of the name of Jesus Christ, to make us feel that we have access to God only through Him who reconciled the world. At the beginning of these public prayers the priest says aloud *Oremus* ("Let us pray"), so as to excite the faithful to greater fervor. During this time he keeps his hands extended, according to an ancient custom in the primitive Church instituted by the Apostles, to recall, without doubt, Jesus Christ crucified.

Here terminate those prayers in the preparation which are the most distant from the sacrifice of the Mass. They are followed by the reading of the Epistle and Gospel, and by the recitation of the Creed, of which we shall speak in the next chapter

From the Epistle to the Canon

Epistle means letter, and the first portion of the Sacred Scriptures read in the Mass is so called because it is usually taken from the inspired letters of the Apostles. Sometimes it is taken from the books of the prophets of the Old Testament.

When it is ended the priest moves to the right side of the altar, expressing by this that the blessing of God has been withdrawn from the Jewish people, because they have lost the faith by rejecting Jesus Christ, and has been transferred to the Christian nations who have believed in this divine Saviour.

All rise when the priest begins to read the Gospel and make the sign of the Cross upon the forehead, the lips, and the heart. The Gospel is the abridged history of the principal actions and most important teaching of Our Lord.

We must listen to the divine words standing, to express that we are ready to follow our adorable Master, to serve Him, and to fight for Him. We sign our foreheads as a witness that we are never ashamed of the holy Name we bear; our lips, because they must be holy to pronounce the words of the Gospel; our hearts, to drive away

the devil, and to prepare them to receive the Word of life, and bring forth abundant fruit.

The Gospel being ended, the priest kisses the book as a mark of reverence, and returns to the middle of the altar. There he recites aloud the Credo, or abridged formula of the Christian faith, composed by the Apostles, and developed by the bishops at the first General Council, held at Nice, fifteen hundred years ago. We stand also during the Creed, to manifest clearly our undoubting faith, and our firm resolve that our daily lives shall wholly accord with this our outward and solemn profession. Nevertheless, from a feeling which may be easily understood, both the priest and the faithful kneel humbly and reverently down when saying that the Eternal Son of God "was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man," for our salvation. At the end of the Creed all make the sign of the Cross, because it is the visible sign of the faith we have just outwardly professed.

Thus end the two first parts of the preparation for the Mass, which may be called the supplications and instructions.

Then follows the Oblation, or offering of the bread and wine, which shall be changed by consecration into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Our Lord Himself, when instituting the Holy Eucharist, showed His Apostles the manner in which they were to offer the divine Sacrifice, and the Church has never departed from this sacred rule.

The priest therefore takes the bread, or Host, upon the paten, a kind of little gilt plate, which always accompanies the chalice, and, having lifted his eyes to heaven to call down a benediction, he elevates the Host, and presents it to the Blessed Trinity, then places it on the corporal, making with the paten the sign of the Cross.

He next goes to the epistle side of the altar, where the server presents to him successively the cruet of wine and that of water, having first kissed them reverently on account of the consecration which is to follow. The priest, having blessed the water, mingles one or two drops with the wine of the chalice; the wine by its strength represents the Divinity of our Saviour, and the drop of water represents His Humanity and ours, sanctified by union with the Divinity. Returning to the middle of the altar, the priest elevates and offers the chalice, just as he elevated and offered the Host. Then lifting his eyes and hands to heaven, he invokes the Holy Spirit that, by His divine fire, the sacrifice and adorable mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption may now be accomplished on the altar. The wash-

ing of hands, which follows these beautiful ceremonies, is a symbol of the perfect purity of heart with which the priest must approach the mysteries of the Body and Blood of Our Lord. Turning to the congregation for the last time, he invites them, with the *Orate Fratres*, to join their prayers to his, and after some secret prayers commences the magnificent invocation used from the earliest ages of Christianity, and called the Preface (from a Latin word, *præfaci*, which means prayers recited before the consecration). The Preface being completed by the triple invocation, *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth* (viz., "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth"), the acolyte rings the bell to warn the congregation to kneel down, if not already doing so, and to recollect themselves more profoundly now that the moment of the consecration is drawing near.

The sublime prayers which the priest recites in secret before and after the consecration are called the Canon of the Mass; the word canon is derived from the Greek and signifies rule. These prayers are so called because they are invariably the same throughout the Latin Church, while some modifications have been introduced into the less solemn prayers of the Sacrifice. One part of the Canon of the Mass was prescribed by the Apostle St. Peter himself, and when the Sovereign Pontiffs, his successors, judged it right to add some words, these additions were regarded as such an important fact that it was noted in the history of the Church, so great was the veneration for the ancient formulas.

Since the sixth century not one word has been altered in the Canon of the Mass, just as it is said to-day. It is from a feeling of reverence that it is secretly recited. For many centuries the exact words were known only to the ministers of the sanctuary, and the faithful did but join their intention to these prayers. The translation into the vulgar tongue has been many times forbidden. Recollection of mind and heart is preferable at such a moment to all the prayers which can be read or recited.

From the Canon to the End.

The Consecration alone is, properly speaking, the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist. When the priest, prepared and sanctified by the rites we have now explained, reaches the solemn moment, he takes the Host into his consecrated hands, and, identifying himself most completely with Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Priest and Sovereign Victim of the Sacrifice, he accomplishes the actions and pronounces

the words which the Son of God was the first to accomplish and pronounce at the Last Supper, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist. Thus it is no longer the man who speaks, but Jesus Himself by the lips of His priest. At His divine word, who called forth all creation out of nothing, the bread is changed into His Adorable Body, and the wine into His Precious Blood. And on the altar there remains only the appearance (or species) of bread and wine, veiling from our sight Jesus Christ Himself living and truly present with His sacred Divinity and His holy Humanity in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar!

Standing now before his God, whom he holds within his hands, the priest kneels down and adores, then elevates the Sacred Host for the adoration of the faithful.

The bell is rung three times at the elevation of the Host, and again three times at the elevation of the chalice. Jesus Christ remains thus upon the altar until the Communion. We must therefore kneel down with deep devotion in the presence of our God, during this time at least, and, penetrated with His infinite mercy, worship Him with heartfelt acts of faith, adoration, contrition, and love; and, thanking Him for His inestimable benefits, we should profit by these precious moments to ask our blessed Saviour for everything we need, both for soul and body, for time and for eternity

If some hear Mass with coldness and indifference, it is because they are wanting both in faith and love

The solemn silence which envelops the consecration from the Sanctus to the Pater is only interrupted by the touching words of humility which the priest pronounces half aloud, striking his breast, "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*"—"To us sinners," etc., and the secret prayer of the Canon terminates soon after with the great remembrance of eternity, "*Per omnia sæcula sæculorum*"—"For ever and ever. Amen."

During the Canon of the Mass the priest makes the sign of the Cross many times over the Host and chalice And the deep meaning thus expressed recalls the whole economy of God's dealings with the human race. When he makes the sign of the Cross three times in succession over the Holy Eucharist, he represents the three phases of the great victory of Christ over Satan, the usurper of His empire and the prince of evil—the first, which ended with the deluge; the second, which ended with the shedding of the Precious Blood on Calvary; the third, which shall end by fire at the defeat of Antichrist, when fallen humanity, forever purified by the Holy Ghost,

the Sanctifier, shall attain its final beatitude. When the priest makes two signs of the Cross in succession over the Host and over the chalice, he recalls the two comings of Our Lord Jesus Christ; the first represented by the Sacred Host, the second by the holy chalice. And even as the two consecrated species are only one and the same Eucharist, one and the same Jesus, one and the same mystery, so also the two comings of the Son of God, though separate and distinct from each other, are only one and the same mystery, the mystery of Jesus Christ, and of His divine grace, and of the Holy Church of God.

After the secret prayers of the Canon, the priest recites aloud the Pater Noster, that sublime prayer which was bequeathed to His own Church by her divine Lord now present on the altar. The priest then breaks the consecrated Host into two particles, thus imitating Jesus Christ, who broke the Sacred Bread before He distributed it to His disciples at the Last Supper. This ceremony also recalls, in a mystical way, the separation of the Soul and Body of the Saviour in the sacrifice of Calvary. Then he invokes three times, under the touching title of Lamb of God, the Divine Eternal Victim of the sins of the whole world, He who, though reigning forever omnipotent in the highest heaven, still annihilates Himself for us day after day in the sacred mystery of the Holy Eucharist.

The time of the priest's communion now draws near, and he is about to receive within his heart, and to unite his whole being to his Creator and his Saviour Jesus Christ; and, taking in one hand the Living Bread come down from heaven, he strikes his breast three times, acknowledges his deep unworthiness, and says, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed."

Then he communicates, and remaining for an instant wholly penetrated by the sacred presence of the God of love, whose living tabernacle he has now become, he takes the chalice, makes upon himself the sign of the Cross, and communicates under the second species.

If any of the faithful present themselves at the altar, the servers repeat the Confiteor aloud, during which each one should excite himself to repentance. The communicants, then kneeling reverently at the altar rail, hold the cloth upon their extended hands to receive the Sacred Host, if by any misfortune it should fall. The priest, while placing the Blessed Sacrament upon the tongue, says, "May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul to life everlasting. Amen."

After having communicated, the priest receives the ablutions, and the server pours wine and water over his fingers which have touched the Blessed Sacrament; then he wipes the chalice and covers it over, folds the corporal, and puts everything in its place.

During this the server removes the Missal from the right side to the left, a symbol of the future conversion of the Jews, God's ancient people, who are also destined, before the end of the world, to participate in the light of the Gospel. And just as the return of the Jews will take place, according to the ancient prophecies, a little time before the end of the world, so this simple ceremony, by which it is prefigured, takes place a little before the end of the Mass.

The priest then turns to the congregation for the last time, dismisses them, and blesses them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by making over them the sign of eternal salvation; and at this moment he is truly a striking image of Jesus Christ at His last coming, when He shall complete the work of His Church by His supreme benediction: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Formerly the Mass ended with this benediction, after which the priest left the altar, reciting the first verses of the Gospel according to St. John; but the custom has now prevailed of reading this Gospel at the altar itself.

We trust that the little that has been said may increase your reverence for divine things and help you to assist with more devotion at the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass.

THE CEREMONIES OF HIGH MASS.

THE two different methods of celebrating Mass are distinguished by the terms Low Mass and High Mass, or the Mass which is sung.

As regards the respective excellence of the two, no difference exists, and the only distinction arises from the outward solemnity of the ceremonies. The principal difference is expressed by the name. Low Mass is said, and High Mass is sung. Christian services were not always accompanied with singing, and it appears that during the first three centuries of the Church the sacred prayers were simply recited. But when the fury of the persecutions had ceased, and the conversion of the Roman empire permitted the Christians to celebrate the sacred mysteries without fear, they became eager to add

to their solemnity, not only by the magnificence of the churches, the vestments, and the sacred vessels, but also by music and singing.

One of the holiest popes who has ever governed the Church, St Gregory the Great, did not consider it beneath his supreme dignity to make regulations with regard to the ecclesiastical or plain chant, which is called for this reason the Gregorian Chant. St. Gregory collected and revised the sacred chants already in use, and added to them a great number which he had composed himself. During the course of centuries, great saints, popes, bishops, monks, emperors, and kings, and sometimes even pious queens, have enriched with their own compositions this venerable collection, known at the present time under the name of the Roman Chant. Formerly the praises of God were sung only by ecclesiastics consecrated entirely to the service of the altar. But now that the number of the ministers of the sanctuary has so greatly diminished, the choir is usually composed of members of the laity, who fulfil this holy duty either for a salary or from a spirit of religion.

We have explained the ceremonies of Low Mass, and will therefore only add a few words concerning the rites peculiar to the solemn High Mass.

The first of these ceremonies is the Asperges, or sprinkling with holy water, which has just been sanctified by the priest with special benedictions; and this is intended to remind the Christian people how holy their lives should be, and with what purity of heart they should assist at the sacred mysteries. It is for the same reason that there is always holy water at the door of the church, with which all should bless themselves on entering.

After the Asperges, and before the Mass, comes the Procession, a grand and beautiful ceremony, common in the Church from the first centuries, and full of deep significance; for Processions are typical of the onward march of the Church throughout succeeding ages. For even as it comes forth from the sacristy, to which it shall finally return, preceded by the cross and terminated by the priest, who is the living symbol of Jesus Christ, thus the Church, coming forth from God her Creator, to return to Him at the end of time, has for her Divine Head Jesus Christ the Son of God, the principle and the end of all things, who alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. It is only by marching under His divine standard and uniting ourselves to Him that we can hope to reach our heavenly home at last. And it is most foolish and ill-judged to criticise the devotion of the faithful who delight to join in Processions. At High Mass the

priest is assisted by two ecclesiastics call the deacon and sub-deacon. The sub deacon represents the patriarchs, prophets, and saints of the Old Testament, and the people of God, who were specially chosen and called to give to the world the Sacred Humanity of the promised Messiah; the office of the sub-deacon at the altar is to prepare the bread and wine destined to become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and also to sing the prophecies and the Epistles. And just as the ancient dispensation, after having prepared and produced the holy humanity of Jesus Christ, refused to acknowledge Him as the world's Redeemer, and did not profit by His sacrifice, so the sub-deacon, after having presented to the deacon the elements of the sacrifice, descends to the foot of the altar, being in a manner excluded from the mysteries about to be celebrated, and remains enveloped in a long veil from the Offertory to the Pater, holding the paten before his eyes to signify the blindness of the Jewish people. But since this blindness will cease before the end of the world, and the ancient people of God will become His chosen people once again, and participate in the merits of the Saviour, so the sub-deacon, after the Pater Noster, goes up again to the altar and stands by the side of the celebrant once more. As the representative of the new dispensation, the deacon alone is charged to sing the Gospel and assist the priest during the whole of the Mass. The singing of the Gospel forms one of the most solemn rites. After having placed the holy book upon the altar, in the same place where the sacred Body of the Lord will presently repose, the deacon, bowing down, asks God to cleanse his heart and lips that he may worthily announce the divine words. He then takes the book, and, holding it on his breast, receives the benediction of the priest, and carries it to the place appointed for the singing of the Gospel, preceded by the cross, and by acolytes carrying lighted candles and incense. The cross signifies that the Gospel contains the law of a crucified God, and the candles that the word of Jesus Christ is the light of the world; the incense is the homage rendered to the divinity of Our Lord.

When the holy reading is ended, the open book is reverently carried to the priest, who kisses it, saying, "May our sins be blotted out by the words of the Gospel."

After the Gospel the sermon is preached, and is usually an explanation of the Gospel which has just been read. One other ceremony which distinguishes High Mass from Low Mass is the use of incense, symbolical of the prayers of the faithful.

THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS.

THESE are the first words of one of the most beautiful prayers of the Catholic Church, taken from the canticle of the angels who, during the night of Christmas, hailed the birth of Christ, the Eternal King, the Adorable Creator, the Almighty Lord, and the most gentle, and loving, and merciful Saviour.

After having implored the pardon of our sins by the Kyrie Eleison, the priest of God, lifting his hands and eyes to heaven, intones or recites aloud the angelical hymn:

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO!

"Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good will. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we glorify Thee, we give Thee thanks for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Thou who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayers. Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou only art holy: Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen."

The first words of this magnificent hymn are taken literally from the Gospel. The holy angels who were sent by God to announce to the shepherds of Bethlehem the coming of Jesus Christ were the first to sing, "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good will." And thus the priest, sent by God to men, addresses to them the same words at the commencement of the Mass, to tell them to prepare themselves to receive worthily the same Jesus, who is so soon to descend upon the altar, humble, hidden, small, and helpless, as in the crib of Bethlehem, and veiling His divine Majesty beneath the appearance of the Sacred Host in the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament.

The shepherds of Bethlehem, men righteous and devout, faithfully responded to this heavenly invitation; they believed, adored, blessed, and praised with their whole hearts the God of heaven, as a little weak and helpless child; and though hidden in His deep humility beneath the form of His own creatures, beneath the form of flesh and blood, they recognized by faith the Infinite, Eternal Son of God.

whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the angels of heaven continually adore. And this is what we too must do, His Christian children, at the invitation of our priests; from the very depths of our hearts we must say to our dear Lord, so soon to descend for us upon the altar: "We bless Thee, we adore Thee, we give Thee thanks, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, have mercy on us; for Thou only, O Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father."

The words of the Gloria, which follow the Canticle of the Angels, belong to the first ages of the Church. Many learned writers attribute them to St. Telesphorus, one of the popes, martyred in the second century; many others to the great St. Hilary, Bishop of Poictiers, who lived in the fourth century. But it is certain that this beautiful prayer clearly embodies the Catholic doctrine with regard to the mystery of the Incarnation, attacked in the time of Hilary by the heresy of the Arians, and energetically defended by that great bishop. The Arians pretended that the Son of God was not equal in all things to the Father and the Holy Ghost, and that thus Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God made man, was inferior to His Father. The Gloria gives a triumphant contradiction to this error by putting into our lips these words to say to Jesus our divine Lord, who is perfect God and perfect man: "We adore Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son: O Lord God, Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, receive our prayers. Have mercy on us, Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father (that is to say, who art His equal and sharest His almighty power); For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father." We must therefore always sing the Gloria with lively sentiments of faith and love for Jesus Christ, and thus unite ourselves to the faith and love of the angels, who invisibly assist the priest at the altar while he celebrates the most holy sacrifice of the Mass.

VESPERS AND BENEDICTIONS.

THE evening service usually consists of Vespers, Compline, and Benediction. The word Vespers signifies evening prayers. No one is positively obliged to be present at these offices, but good Catholics consider it a duty. Formerly it was an obligation to assist at Vespers as well as at Mass.

Vespers are usually composed of five psalms, a hymn, the Magnificat, and a prayer. After having recited the Pater Noster and Ave Maria in secret, the celebrant, standing, and turned to the altar, makes the sign of the cross, to show that our prayers have access to God only through the merits of Jesus Christ crucified, and sings at the same time these words, with which the divine office always commences: "*Deus, in adjutorium meum intende*"—"O God, come to my assistance." It was Pope Gregory the Great, who, twelve hundred years ago, directed that this versicle, taken from the sixty-ninth Psalm, should be recited before each of the hours. It is followed by the Gloria Patri, or Invocation to the Blessed Trinity, in whose honor the faithful assemble for prayer. *Alleluia* is a Hebrew word which signifies Glory to God.

As we do not wish to speak here of the Psalms in detail, we shall only say that it is impossible to judge of the beauty of these holy canticles from the ordinary translations in our prayer-books. It is said that by being translated from the original Hebrew into the Latin tongue, much of their beauty has been lost, and a second translation deteriorates from them still more. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, and expressing the interior sentiments of Jesus Christ, of the Church, and of all faithful souls, the Psalms, to the number of a hundred and fifty, form one of the most precious books of the Holy Scripture.

Almost all were composed by the prophet-king, David, about a thousand years before the coming of the Saviour. They are filled with sublime prophecies relating to the Son of God, who declared with His own divine lips that it was of Him that David wrote in the Psalms.

Vespers almost always commence with the psalm *Dixit Dominus*. This Psalm, which Jesus Christ applied to Himself in the hearing of the Pharisees, who desired to tempt Him, foreshadows, in a few verses, the divinity, the incarnation, the priesthood, the almighty power, the reign, and the sufferings of the Saviour.

Many of the tunes to which the psalms are sung have been borrowed from the Greek Chant, and are of the greatest antiquity; and this beautiful and religious harmony is truly calculated to produce an impression truly worthy of the holiness of Christianity. And here we must repeat what we said of the High Mass: Psalms are not only prayers, they are prayers in song. They must be sung, and not simply recited. It is a deplorable custom to have Vespers and Benediction without music, and one which robs these choral offices both of their interest and solemnity.

All the psalms end with the Doxology, which the ecclesiastics recite with uncovered head, and during which all should bend. This is a very ancient custom in the Christian Church. It is attributed to the Pope St. Damasus, who lived in the fourth century; but it is greatly anterior to his pontificate. The Antiphon consists of a few words, intended to recall to the faithful the spirit of the mysteries celebrated in the Liturgy. They are sung differently to the psalms to avoid monotony. Before the Magnificat comes a hymn, which is also intended to celebrate the feast of the day. In the Roman Liturgy the greater part of these hymns are sacred memorials of Christian antiquity, the poetic and religious inspiration of the Popes, St. Gelasius, St. Damasus, St. Gregory the Great, of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, and many other Pontiffs and Doctors of all centuries

Vespers end with the solemn chant of the Magnificat. This divine canticle, taken entirely from the Gospel, was recited for the first time by the Blessed Virgin herself on the day of her visitation to her cousin, St. Elizabeth. St. Bernard calls it "the canticle of humility." For the Blessed Virgin, in answer to the praises addressed to her as the Mother of God, only spoke of her own lowliness, and of the mercy of God who had so magnified her. During the Magnificat every one stands, out of reverence for the words of the Gospel. The same rule is observed at Compline for the canticle *Nunc dimittis*, also taken from the Gospel of St. Luke.

After the first verses of the Magnificat the altar is incensed, and also the priest, the ecclesiastics, and the faithful. Incense, which ever mounts in clouds of perfume up to heaven, is symbolical of prayer: "Let my prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in Thy sight." The fire, without which incense cannot be used, is the symbol of the Holy Ghost, of Jesus Christ, without whom we cannot pray or gain access to God. The altar is incensed because it represents the divinity of Jesus Christ; and the priest, the ecclesiastics, and the congregation are incensed to honor Jesus Christ, who dwells within the members of His Church in order to render them participants in His eternal life; and the priests are incensed a second time to honor also the Divine Priesthood of Our Lord, in which they share by their sacred character. During this time all should recollect themselves, and renew their resolutions to be ever worthy of their holy vocation.

Compline (Latin *con*, *pleo*, signifying completion of the prayers of the office) is composed, like Vespers, of some psalms, a hymn, and a

canticle, and was instituted by St. Benedict, in the fifth century to prepare his religious for the night's repose. The Roman Church considered this such a beautiful idea that she adopted it, and made it a general rule. Compline terminates by an invocation to the Blessed Virgin, which varies according to the different religious epochs of the year. The principal, the Salve Regina, is a memorial of the Crusades, and was composed in the year 1096 by a celebrated French warrior, named Adhémar de Monteil, who, being consecrated to the service of God, and having become Bishop of Puy, took part, as Papal Legate, in the first Crusade.

The evening office usually ends with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, a devotion chiefly extended during the sixteenth century in order to make reparation to our blessed Lord for all the blasphemy and sacrilegious outrages of those unhappy times against the Holy Sacrament. Benediction consists of some prayers sung, such as the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, and other prayers special to the feast that is celebrated; after which the Tabernacle is opened, and the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the midst of a certain number of lighted candles. Benediction may be given by simply exposing the holy ciborium in which Jesus Christ reposes; but in solemn Benediction the monstrance is used, a sacred vessel in the form of a star, the centre of which, being made of crystal, allows the Blessed Sacrament to be seen. Each one prostrates himself in the sacred presence of God. The priest incenses three times, to honor the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and then intones the Tantum Ergo Sacramentum, composed by St. Thomas Aquinas in honor of the most holy Sacrament; it is sung by the choir, and followed by a prayer; after which the priest, being enveloped in a long white veil, symbolizing the perfect holiness of Jesus Christ, with which His ministers should be clothed in order to approach Him worthily, goes up to the altar, prostrates himself, takes the monstrance, and turns to the people; the ringing of the bell warns the congregation of the solemn moment; and our blessed Lord, present in the Sacrament of His love, blesses His children Himself. It is for this reason that the Benediction is given in silence.

In concluding this chapter, I would recommend my readers, not only to be present at the holy services of the Church, but to join in them with reverence and devotion. May a constant remembrance of the Presence of our dear Lord in the Tabernacle keep them ever serious and recollected. May they carefully abstain from talking, yawning, making a noise, or looking about, and apply themselves with all

their hearts to prayer. May they join their voices when they can in the music of the Church, and thus give to all the good example of sanctifying those times and seasons which are consecrated to God.

THE PSALMS.

We have already spoken of the Psalms, but it is so important and so practical a subject that we must return to it once more.

The Psalms are prophetic hymns and divinely inspired prayers, and were almost all composed by the prophet-kings David and Solomon. They form one of the most beautiful books of the Holy Scriptures, and it is of faith that all the hundred and fifty are inspired.

The Psalms are all prophecies, in the sense that they all express more or less clearly the adorable mysteries of our redemption. There is a great number of which we are bound to believe this; the Dixit Dominus, for instance, which Our Lord Jesus Christ interprets by applying to Himself in the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew. The Fathers of the Church have all interpreted the Psalms by applying them directly to Our Lord, and to all the mysteries of His divine kingdom from the beginning to the end of time. These holy canticles relate equally to the second coming of Jesus Christ and His final triumph both on earth and in heaven, and to His first coming, followed by the terrible struggles of His militant Church. In almost all the Psalms there is what may be called an outward and historical meaning, which is only of passing interest, while their real value consists in all that relates to the personages or events figurative of the Messiah. David himself, like so many in the Old Testament, was indeed a prophetic figure of the Christ-King who was to come hereafter; and the accounts of the greater part of the events of his reign, and of the reign of Solomon, which gave occasion for the composition of the Psalms, were only prophecies, only symbols of great and divine mysteries, which Jesus Christ Himself was one day to accomplish, as King of the true Israel, King of the Holy Church, first militant, and then triumphant. The combats of David and the glories of Solomon have comparatively little interest for us; but that which does interest us, closely and personally, are the combats and triumphs in which Jesus Christ, our King, engages and overcomes with us, and in us, for the salvation of our souls and for the glory of God.

We must, therefore, pierce through the outward and historical meaning which lies upon the surface to reach the hidden spiritual and

Christian meaning, which is not only the most important, but the only important teaching of the Psalms. The Christian who does not discover Jesus Christ beneath the outward letter does not rightly understand what he reads. St. Augustine used to teach the people of Hipponium that Jesus Christ is to all the books of Holy Scripture, but especially to the Psalms, just what the soul is to the body; the historical portions, he added, have no other object than to represent and to manifest the mysteries of Jesus the Saviour, even as the wood of a lyre is only placed there by the workman in order to sustain the strings, and to cause them to vibrate beneath the touch of a skilful musician. "If, therefore, in reciting the Psalm, you have there discovered Christ, you have found the true sense—*Si intellexisti Christum, tunc intellexisti;* if, on the contrary, you have not discovered Christ, you have not found the true sense—*Si Christum non intellexisti, non intellexisti.*" This observation is sufficient to make clear to us the divine significance of all the Psalms, and to teach us also that they are not easily understood. But it is very consoling to know that when we recite them as prayers they greatly glorify God, because Jesus Christ, who prays in us and with us, supplies for our ignorance by grasping in our stead the full purport of the words which He Himself inspired to His prophets. Jesus Christ praises and glorifies His Heavenly Father by these Psalms, in the name of the whole Church, in the name of all creation, in the name of heaven and earth; and in this we are greatly honored, that Our Lord has made choice of our lips and our poor faltering words as a living organ by means of which these holy canticles may be ever echoed and repeated from one generation to another throughout succeeding ages. In reciting them, we must therefore, first of all, unite ourselves to Jesus, who, as St. Paul says, prays within us and in whom we pray —"*Christus, in quo oramus.*" It is far sweeter and more devotional to sing the Psalms than simply to recite them.

The same psalm has often many different meanings, all equally true. One example will be sufficient to explain this. Take, for instance, this short one which every one knows, the hundred and sixteenth—

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes; laudate eum omnes populi. Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus; et veritas Domini manet in æternum.

Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people. Because His mercy is confirmed upon us: and the truth of the Lord remaineth forever.

First sense: It is the prayer which the Saviour uttered during the days of His mortal life, to express to His Heavenly Father the desires He offered up, as the Redeemer of mankind, that all the nations

of the earth should acknowledge, bless, and love the one true God, and reap the benefits of the Redemption, and see the Lord reign over them for ever.

Second sense: The same prayer and the same desires offered up by Jesus Christ living in His Church, and gaining by her means all nations to the one true faith.

Third sense: It is the prayer of the Church, of the Pope, of the priests, and the faithful rejoicing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and calling upon all infidels and heretics to share in this great happiness with them.

Fourth sense: It is the prophetic cry of King David, who from afar hailed the future Messiah, Christ the Lord, and invited all nations, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, to adore Him, and to desire Him to reign over them; it is prophetic of the universal reign of Jesus Christ, and of His Church, at the end of time before the last judgment; it is prophetic of the return of the Jewish people, who, after having denied the Christ, shall be perfectly converted, and shall receive, through the mercy of God, the confirmation of the ancient promises.

Fifth sense: It is a prayer prophetic of the glory of Jesus Christ at His second coming, and of the joy of the militant Church, which finds consolation in her present trials, and for the hardness of heart of so many people, by contemplating from afar the universal and eternal triumph of the true Solomon. This psalm is as certainly a prophecy for us as it was for David; for it announces to us events which are not yet realized, namely, the entire and simultaneous conversion of all nations, the final return of the Jews and their restoration to all their ancient religious privileges, and lastly, the eternal reign of Jesus Christ, who is Himself the Truth, the Living and Incarnate Truth, *Veritas Domini.*

This beautiful psalm is also a canticle of sacred joy, and of acts of thanksgiving, by which we thank God for all the graces which He gives us.

By this short example we may judge a little of the spiritual treasures hidden in the Psalms.

We will give one other example, but in a few words only. The Miserere is known to every one. It is the cry of repentance, yet of sweet and humble confidence, which goes upward to the throne of God. 1st, from the Sacred Heart and the Divine Lips of Jesus, burdened with our sins, and asking pardon of God for the whole world's iniquity, of which He is the Victim; 2d, from the Sacred Heart and the Divine Lips of Jesus, living in His Church, and through

her doing penance for the sins of all mankind; 3d, from the heart and lips of every Christian, of each poor sinner, first for his own sins, and then for those of his brethren. Much more might be added, but the little I have said will be sufficient to give to pious souls a key to many other psalms. Let us therefore love to sing them, these sacred canticles of Our Lord, in imitation of the faithful of the early Church. The melody to which the Church has set them is full of beauty, and yet so simple that the most ignorant can easily join in them. The tunes to which they are sung come from the East, and are of great antiquity. The singing of the Psalms lifts up the heart to God. The Church invites us all to sing; and if some grow tired in Church, it is because they do not enter into the Catholic form of prayer, and do not sing with their brethren.

Our Lord Himself, in many psalms, invites us thus to sing His praises: "Sing, sing unto the Lord! Sing with understanding: Let the whole earth sing the praises of God!"—"*Cantate Domino, omnis terra!*"

THE DIXIT DOMINUS.

THIS Psalm, which is the hundred and ninth, is well known to the faithful, because the Church sings it always on Sundays and feast-days at the beginning of the evening office. It is a magnificent prophecy which exalts the glory of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as the conqueror of Satan in His own Divine Person at His first coming, and as the conqueror of Satan in His Church, and in all His elect throughout all ages, but especially at His second coming. "The Lord said to my Lord"—"*Dixit Dominus Domino meo.*" God the Father is Lord, as God the Son is Lord, as God the Holy Ghost is Lord; nevertheless the Son of God, having become the King of this world by the mystery of His Incarnation, is henceforth Our Lord and Master by a double title; thus we say in the Creed, "I believe in One God the Father Almighty, . . . and in one Lord Jesus Christ." . . .

Jesus, notwithstanding His sacred humanity, by which He became the minister of God and His most perfect servant, is eternally equal in all things to the Father and the Holy Ghost. He is God, and as His humanity is united to His divinity in one indivisible Person who is Divine, Eternal, and Almighty, the Father says to His well-beloved Son, risen and ascending into heaven, "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool"—"*Sede a dextris meis, donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum.*" God has neither right nor left, since He is a pure Spirit: the right hand of

God signifies complete equality in power and glory, and a full participation in the eternal royalty of the Father. Neither is Jesus Christ seated in celestial glory; for heaven is an ineffable state, quite different to earth; even glorified bodies have no relation, no resemblance to what we see here below; thus, in heaven bodies no longer occupy space; they have an existence which St. Paul calls spiritual, *corpus spiritale;* a divine supernatural condition which finite minds cannot conceive, and from which it follows, among other things, that Our Lord can be, and is, truly and entirely present in every consecrated Host in the whole world; and that in breaking or in moving the Sacred Host the divine celestial Body of Our Lord is neither moved nor broken.

"We break the Sacrament; but bold
And firm thy faith shall keep its hold;
Deem not the whole doth more enfold
Than in the fractured part resides.
Deem not the Christ doth broken lie,
'Tis but the sign that meets the eye;
The great unseen Reality
In all its fulness still abides."

The "enemies" of Jesus Christ are the impious, the unbelieving, the sinful, and all who wilfully oppose the law and the Church of God. At the present day, as in all ages, Jesus Christ has many enemies; revolutionary spirits who attack the Papacy and the Church; governments which endeavor to stamp out even the semblance of religion from their councils; men who dive so deeply into the wonders of creation that they become bewildered by the very vastness of the divine conceptions, and end by denying the God from whom they have received the power to reason or think at all; systems of education based upon the false assumption that any amelioration in the condition of the poor is to be effected by a purely secular teaching, which leaves those better, higher impulses that exist, even in the most degraded of mankind, neglected and uncultivated; while the whole history of the human race will prove that religion and civilization go ever hand in hand. And lastly, false Christians, unworthy Catholics, who attack or abandon what they profess to respect, and thus furnish dangerous weapons for the enemies of Jesus Christ and of His Holy Church.

The most terrible of all the enemies of Jesus will be the Antichrist; St. Paul calls him "the eldest son of Satan." He will reign for a time over the whole earth; he will persecute the Church; he will call himself the Christ, and will work miracles by the power of Satan.

"insomuch as to deceive even the elect." But at the moment when everything will seem to be lost, Our Lord will appear in the majesty of His glory, and will crush His enemy, as well as his most guilty followers, and, as the psalm adds, "Shall send forth the rod of His power out of Sion—"*Virgam virtutis tuæ emittet Dominus ex Sion.*" For, according to ancient traditions, it will be at Sion, upon Mount Calvary, that Our Lord will forever subdue the Antichrist and Satan; and as at His first coming it was from Jerusalem that the militant Church went forth to conquer the world and to fight the good fight, so, at the second coming (which will probably not be a moment, but an epoch like the first; an epoch of universal glory and triumph for the Holy Church; an epoch of repose after the combat; the Sabbath of the great week which will precede the Sunday of Eternity), so, I say, at the second coming of the Redeemer, it is from Jerusalem, the Holy City, the city of Jesus and of Mary, that salvation, glory, and the life eternal shall be poured forth like a torrent of love over the whole earth. Then, Satan being vanquished and bound, as St. John says, all the world will be Christian; there will be only one fold and one Shepherd, and Jesus will reign supremely over all His creatures. It is this which is foretold in the Dixit Dominus: "Rule Thou," the Father says to Him, "in the midst of Thine enemies"—"*Dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.*" For the principle of all triumph, all strength, and all sanctity is in Thyself; "*tecum principium;*" Thou art the Lord.

"*In die virtutis tuæ, in splendoribus sanctorum*"—"In the day of Thy power, amid the brightness of the saints." This triumphal day of Jesus Christ is first the day of His resurrection and His glorious ascension; and still more is it the day of His second coming, the day of the great triumph and resurrection of His Church, when He shall establish her forever, "amid the brightness of the saints." And the saints are all the elect, the great prophets, Apostles, martyrs, and servants of Jesus Christ, who shall arise gloriously at the moment of His coming, and after having shared His combats shall participate in the triumph of their Head. If we are but faithful to Our Lord till death, we shall reign with Him forever.

The psalm adds to the glory of Jesus Christ these beautiful words, which proclaim His precedence over every creature, and His eternal Priesthood: "*Ex utero ante luciferum genui te. Juravit Dominus, et non pœnitebit eum: Tu es sacerdos in æternum*"—"From the womb before the day-star have I begotten Thee. (It is always God the Father who speaks to His Son.) The Lord hath sworn and will

not repent: Thou art a Priest forever." Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, the Son of God and of the Blessed Virgin, is, as St. Paul says, the first-born of every creature, not in the order of time, but in the order of grace, and of the reign of God over His creatures. In this sense Jesus is the first and the chief; He was before Mary, before David, before Abraham, before Adam and Eve, before every creature, before the light, before the Angels and before Lucifer, the first and highest of the Angels, who refused to acknowledge and adore the Son of God in the Son of Mary, who desired to usurp the universal royalty of Jesus, and who, as a punishment for this sacrilege, was, and is, and will forever be cast down from heaven to earth, vanquished by his Lord and Our Lord Jesus Christ. At the second coming Lucifer and the world will both be vanquished by us, the living members of the King of glory.

Jesus Christ is "a Priest forever," because He is the Mediator between God and men; the Mediator who gives God to men and unites men to God, who offers to the Divine Majesty a perpetual sacrifice of adoration, thanksgiving, prayer, and pardon, who teaches truth and religion to men, who blesses, consoles, sanctifies and saves them: and such is the ministry of the priest. Jesus Christ is at the same time the great Creator, the living God, the only Lord, the King, the Priest, and the Saviour of men.

He is a priest according to the order of Melchisedec, "*secundum ordinem Melchisedeche.*" Like unto the mysterious King of Salem, who offered up from Abraham a singular sacrifice of bread and wine, Jesus Christ instituted on Holy Thursday in the Cenaculum, under the form and the appearances of bread and wine, the sacrifice of the new alliance, in which He perpetually immolates Himself on our altars, until the end of the world, in the hands and by the ministry of His priests. Jesus is the eternal Priest and the Eucharistic Victim. His ministers are priests only because He communicates to them his own Divine Priesthood in the sacrament of Holy Orders. "*Dominus a dextris tuis: confregit in die iræ suæ reges.*" O Father omnipotent! Thy Divine Son is therefore at Thy right hand, and it is He who shall overthrow kings in the day of His wrath The day of God's wrath is, generally speaking, the day in which the sinner receives the punishment due to his sins, whether it be in this world or the next; but it is more especially the day upon which Jesus shall come again in glory and shall strike with a single blow the Antichrist and the ten kings of whom the Scripture speaks. The words of the psalm also refer to the fallen spirits with Satan at their head,

whom Our Lord shall cast down forever upon that great and terrible day. Then Jesus shall become the sole Judge, the supreme Judge of all the nations of the earth; *judicabit in nationibus.* He will wholly destroy, from one end of the world to the other, all the works of the devil. He will annihilate all evil, and will establish everywhere that primitive order, that divine harmony which, in Eden, constituted the happiness of unfallen man; the whole earth will become upon this seventh day of the world the great terrestrial paradise, the great kingdom of Jesus Christ; and the joyful Church will forget, beneath the peaceful sceptre of the Divine Solomon, the cruel enemies whom she was forced to encounter in that onward march which led her to this perfect day, this great Easter-tide, this glorious resurrection! Her humiliations and her griefs are now no more; their measure will be henceforth the measure of her immutable glory; "*de torrente in via bibet, propterea exaltabit caput.*"

The accomplishment of this great prophecy is to be seen from the first conquest of Jesus Christ in the person of His martyrs, even until that day so greatly to be desired, when it will be perfectly accomplished by the complete and universal triumph of Jesus Christ, and of His holy Church. With what sentiments of hope and Christian enthusiasm, with what lively and consoling faith should we sing this beautiful psalm, if we did but reflect a little on the great events which it proclaims.

LAUDATE, PUERI, DOMINUM.

As this psalm recurs so often in the offices of the Church, we think it might be serviceable to give a short explanation of it here; it is the hundred and eleventh, and is a very beautiful and touching hymn of gratitude and love.

"Praise the Lord, ye children: praise ye the name of the Lord"—"*Laudate, pueri, Dominum; laudate nomen Domini.*" Who are these children of God? Who is the Lord? What is His holy Name? Jesus is the Lord, and it is His sacred Name which must be ever praised and blessed; for the name of any person is the sensible sign which expresses, represents, and manifests him to the world. Jesus is the Name of our God and King, that is to say, that Jesus Our Lord expresses and manifests in His own Divine Person the one true living God, making God known to men, rendering God present in the midst of the world, and being Himself a visible, tangible, and perfect image of the great invisible Creator, of the God who, but

through Jesus Christ, cannot be known or possessed by any creature, because, as St. Paul says, He "inhabitest light inaccessible." He who knows Jesus Christ, knows God; he who knows not Jesus Christ, knows not God, knows not the true Name of God; for Jesus is "the brightness of His glory, and the figure of His substance."

The children who are thus called upon to praise Jesus, to praise the living Name of God, and all angels, are all Christians, from the beginning to the end of time. Jesus is indeed for every creature the divine and human centre, create and uncreate, of the one true faith.

Hear the unfaltering response of all the servants of God, angels and men, to this invitation! "*Sit nomen Domini benedictum, ex hoc nunc et usque in seculum;*" Blessed be the name of the Lord: from this time forth for evermore! From the rising up of the sun, that is, from the day that Jesus triumphed over Satan, when the light shone in darkness, until the evening, yea, even until the end of time, we must praise our heavenly King, our divine Lord, the well-beloved name of our well-beloved God: "*A solis ortu usque ad occasum laudabile nomen Domini.*"

And next, we have a prophecy of the Saviour's future reign over every nation: "*Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus, et super cœlos gloria ejus.*" "The heavens" here spoken of are the angels; the holy angels whose celestial glory is infinitely beneath the glory of the sacred humanity of Jesus Christ, and also the wicked angels who desired to usurp this incommunicable glory, and who for this crime are cast down to the lowest depths of hell. "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, and regardeth the things that are lowly in heaven and in earth?"—"*Quis sicut Dominus, Deus noster, qui in altis habitat? et humilia respicit in cœlo et in terra?*"

The more humble and lowly the creature, the more highly is he blessed and loved by the Creator; the more he abases himself, so much the more does God exalt him. Jesus, in His Sacred Humanity, annihilated Himself before the majesty of His Father with a humility so perfect, so complete, so full of love, that He merited, as the Apostle said, to be exalted by His heavenly Father, and, even in His humanity, to share so completely in the glory and eternal royalty of God that in the name of Jesus, of the Word Incarnate, of the Son of Mary, every knee should bow in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. It is He who is raised up from the earth, and who, after suffering the deepest humiliation, takes His place among the angels above principalities and powers; "*Suscitans a terra inopem, et de stercore erigens pauperem, ut collocet eum cum principibus populi*

sui." And Jesus raises and lifts up to heaven all His servants who are meek and humble of heart as He was without vanity and without pride, *inopem et pauperem;* before all others, and above all others, He thus exalts, crowns, and glorifies the most humble Virgin Mary, the purest and holiest of creatures, because she was the lowliest; and His great servants both in heaven and earth, whose name and beatitude we venerate; the seraphims and archangels, Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael; in the ancient law, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Job, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and the other prophets; in the new law, St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, and all the Apostles; St. Mary Magdalen and St. Martha; and all those great saints who, from the very cradle of Christianity up to the present day, have shone as glorious luminaries in the firmament of holy Church.

Jesus, from the height of His glory, and from the depths of the holy tabernacle where He dwells in the blessed Eucharist, is the principle of the life and fecundity of His Church: the ancient Church, the Church of the Jews, had life and brought forth fruit so long as it believed in Him, from the time of Moses until the Incarnation; but since it rejected Him, it has become sterile, and has wandered throughout succeeding ages desolate and dishonored. Before the second coming of the Saviour, and even before the coming of Antichrist, this Church will be converted, will return to her primitive faith, to the faith of the Prophets, to the faith of Abraham and of the holy Patriarchs, to the Christian Catholic faith; Jesus, by His grace, will draw her from the desert and bring her back once more to the Father's home, where, acknowledging the true Messiah, she will find again with Him the principle of life and fecundity, of happiness and joy. This is prophesied in the last verse of the beautiful psalm we have explained: "*Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo, matrem filiorum lætantem.*"

THE DE PROFUNDIS.

THE De Profundis is the hundred and twenty-ninth psalm. From the origin of Christianity the Church has chosen it for the funeral chant, and the principal prayer at Christian burials. It is indeed a psalm full of hope and full of sweetness, and yet, at the same time, expressive of humility and sadness. As we recite it every day, or at least very often for the repose of the faithful departed, a brief explanation may be of some use. "*De profundis clamavi ad te Dom-*

inc"—"Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord!" And first, it is Jesus Christ who speaks thus, overwhelmed with all confusion, and annihilated before the infinite holiness of His Father; out of pure love for us He has taken upon Himself the weight of our iniquity; and this heavy weight which drags us down into the lowest depths of hell reduces our dear Lord and our most holy Victim to the last degree of abasement of which a creature can be capable. "*De profundis,*" out of the depths of this abyss of humiliation, Jesus cries to His Father: "Lord, hear my voice, let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication!"—"*Domine exaudi vocem meam. Fiant aures tuæ intendentes in vocem deprecationis meæ.*" The prayer of Jesus is always heard by the Father, because, although He is the victim of sin, the well-beloved Son of Mary is ever the eternal object of the Father's complacency. The pardon that we could not obtain for ourselves, our Saviour asks and obtains for us. This is why, in reciting the De Profundis, we should unite ourselves interiorly to Jesus Christ dwelling within our hearts; this is a truth we cannot repeat too often.

As Jesus Christ is our God as well as our Advocate, we may also address to Him these beautiful words of the De Profundis: O Lord Jesus, out of the depths of my misery I lift up my voice unto Thee; deign to hear my prayer, O Thou who hast wept and suffered and died to deliver me from this abyss.

And lastly, the Church teaches us to sing these same words for the holy souls who are plunged in the terrible depths of purgatory; and by virtue of the Communion of Saints which unites into one body all the Christians of heaven, of earth, and of purgatory, we lend our lips and words to these poor suffering souls to obtain for them a speedy and perfect deliverance.

"*Si iniquitates observaveris, Domine, Domine quis sustenebit?*"—"If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall abide it?" This is the utterance of true humility. This is indeed the cry of the poor sinner who acknowledges all his unworthiness, and abandons himself utterly to the infinite mercy of God! But as true humility is always accompanied with love and hope, the Psalm immediately adds—"With Thee there is merciful forgiveness, and because of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord." "*Propter legem tuam.*" What is this law of God? For Jesus Himself it was the infinite love of the Father which permitted the Son of God to become Our Saviour. "Because of Thy holy will, because of this law of love, my Father, I rejoice and hope, though sin reduces me to agony, to crucifixion.

and to death, even the death of the cross!" For the Church militant and suffering, and for each one of us, "the law of the Lord" is the mystery of the Incarnation and the Redemption, it is Jesus Christ Himself; the Living Law of God, the only object of our hope, who alone can rescue us from the abyss of sin, from the abyss of purgatory. Jesus Christ, known, served, and loved, this is the law of God for humanity, this is the law of God for each one among us.

"My soul hath waited on His word; my soul hath hoped in the Lord." "The Word of God" is again the Incarnate Word, in whom is "the light of men;" it is ever, it is always our dear Lord and Saviour in whom we trust for time and for eternity. "From the morning watch even until night: let Israel hope in the Lord"—"*a custodia matutina usque ad noctem speret Israel in Domino.*" In the Church on earth, and the Church in purgatory, we behold the true Israel, the true people of God. "From the morning watch," that is to say, from the beginning of the world, from the days of Adam, Abel, and Seth, "until night," until the end of time, the Church, and each one of her children, loves, hopes, and believes in Jesus Christ, and through Him alone escapes finally from sin and the punishment that is due to it. In purgatory as upon earth, Israel confides in Jesus Christ, and by being united to Him in heaven will possess in eternity the infinite beatitude it has longed and waited for in time.

"For with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him is plenteous redemption." His merits are infinite because they are divine; and had there been many hundred millions more of sinful souls to save, to purify, to sanctify, the precious blood of Jesus would have flowed ever superabundantly, and would have clothed them all with grace and glory in the presence of the justice of God. It will be He, it will be Jesus who on earth and in purgatory shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities: "*Et ipse redimet Israel ex omnibus iniquitatibus ejus.*"

The De Profundis is therefore a cry of hope, a prayer of love coming forth from the Sacred Heart to be re-echoed by our own; and, while hoping for ourselves, we must hope also for our suffering brethren in purgatory, and we have confidence that if we pray with our whole hearts, our merciful Lord will soon deliver these souls, still dearer to Him than ourselves, and will admit them perfectly purified into peace and eternal rest. "*Et ipse redimet Israel de iniquitatibus ejus.*"

THE MAGNIFICAT.

THE Magnificat is the canticle of thanksgiving inspired by the Holy Ghost to the Blessed Virgin when, after the Annunciation, Mary went to visit her holy cousin Elizabeth, bearing in her virginal womb the Incarnate Son of God.

Elizabeth, at the age of nearly eighty years, had miraculously become the mother of the future precursor of the Messiah, and had been commanded by the Angel Gabriel to give to this child of grace and benediction the mysterious name of John, signifying in Hebrew full of grace. As soon as she perceived Mary, St. Elizabeth felt the infant leap in her womb for joy, coming forth to meet the Blessed Virgin who represented the new alliance and the Christian Church, which possesses, contains, and gives Jesus to the world. Elizabeth represented the ancient alliance, the Jewish Church, Mother of the prophets and of the precursor. The very approach of Jesus and of Mary immediately filled with the Holy Ghost both the mother and the son. St. John the Baptist was presanctified, that is to say, cleansed from original sin in his mother's womb, just as, from the beginning of the human race, Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, and the other holy patriarchs—Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, Isaias, and the other holy prophets, as well as all the faithful of the Old Testament, had been presanctified by their faith and hope in the Christ who was to come. Elizabeth, enlightened interiorly as to the mystery of the Incarnation and the divine maternity of Mary, adored Jesus in the womb of the Virgin Mother, crying with humility and love: "Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" And Mary being also filled with the Holy Ghost, who, by the sacred indwelling of her divine Son, completely inundated her most pure soul, replied: "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*"—"my soul doth magnify the Lord." I glorify God the Father who has chosen me for His Spouse, and has made me the Mother of His Eternal Son whom He eternally begets in His infinite glory; I glorify God the Son who has become my Son, my Child, whom I bear within me, to whom I give my flesh, my blood, and my own substance, who, perfect God as He is, my Creator and my Lord, is yet my little Child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; I glorify God the Holy Ghost, who fills me with His light, with heavenly love, with all His gifts, with all His graces, who has rendered my virginity miraculously fruitful, and who has worked within me the ineffa-

ble mystery of the Incarnation, the central point of religion, the groundwork of creation, the salvation and redemption of sinners, the principle and the end of all things. My soul doth magnify the Lord! "*Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo*"—"and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Peace and joy dwell in the faithful souls where Jesus Christ reposes; the holiest soul is always the most peaceful, the most serene, and the most joyful; love, peace, and joy, with patience, goodness, tenderness, constancy, gentleness, fidelity, modesty, purity, and chastity, are the blessed fruits of the Spirit in a truly Christian soul. What then must have been the joy of the Blessed Virgin, that perfect joy of which Jesus Himself was the most pure source? Jesus her Saviour! Jesus was indeed most truly the Saviour of Mary, not in the sense that He purified her as He purifies us from original and actual sin, and thus opened to her the gate of heaven, but in the sense that by His divine merits He preserved her absolutely from all stain, all sin, all imperfection.

"*Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ*"—"Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid." The Blessed Virgin was the humblest of all creatures, and for this reason was she chosen by God. She knew and clearly saw by the light of faith that she was nothing before God, that she depended absolutely upon Him in soul and body, in mind and will, in all her powers, and in her very existence; and, living in this perfect dependence, she annihilated and completely forgot herself in every detail of her life, so completely as to think only of God, to follow only the will of God, to live only for God—in one word, to belong to God alone; and that with a deep and tender love. Such is Christian humility, which seeth not itself from seeing only God, but which is regarded by God with divine complacency. The Blessed Virgin speaks of herself here and at all times as "the handmaid" of the Lord; and well might she call herself this; for this reason it was, and because of this truth, this justice, this simplicity, that God chose her from among all others to be His glorious Mother, the Sovereign Mistress of angels and of men, the Queen of the Church, and the Queen of heaven. The more meek and humble we are, so much the more will Jesus love and regard us with favor, and dwell within our hearts.

"*Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.*" *Beata* means both holy and blessed; this is why the Church calls Mary both the "Holy Virgin" and the "Blessed Virgin." All Christian generations from the first unto the last have called, and are still calling, and shall forever call her Blessed; thus regarding with trans

ports of faith and hope and love, with perfect reverence and tender confidence, the Mother of the Saviour, the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Mother of God. And now can it be that they who neither love nor honor her can form a part of the "generations" which, springing here below from the fruitful bosom of the Church, are destined to become hereafter, on the day of their true birth, which is the day of death, children in the heavenly home, children in the eternal kingdom of which Mary is the well-beloved Queen?

"*Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est*"—"He that is mighty hath done great things unto me." Yes, verily! so great that no creature either in heaven or on earth shall be able to fathom the depth, nor to comprehend the infinite and divine extent of these mysteries and graces. And yet all may be summed up in a single name: the Holy Name of Jesus! Behold what the Blessed Trinity, the living God, in His almighty power and infinite goodness, hath "done unto Mary." Jesus Christ; the mystery of mysteries, the beginning, the principle, the end of the natural order, of the spiritual order, and of the divine order; eternity in time, and time united to eternity; the Divine Life becoming our life, even ours; man becoming the Son of God; yea, becoming God, the only living God, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost reigneth forever and ever. . . . Behold what God hath done unto Mary, unto Mary the Mother of God. All other graces bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin are indeed but the consequence and the radiation of that fundamental grace which is her divine Maternity, or, in other words, the mystery of the Incarnation, even Jesus Christ.

"*Et sanctum nomen ejus*"—"and holy is His name." Jesus is holy, He only is holy, the Holy One of God, who sanctifieth the saints. The divine Son of Mary is the source of the holiness of the Church and of each one of her members; Mary herself, who gives Jesus to us, is the channel of all holiness and grace.

"*Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum*"—"and His mercy is from generation to generation unto them that fear Him." But not to the unbelieving and the indifferent, not to those who pass blameless in the eyes of the world, though they live as if there were no God, no Saviour, and no Church. We must fear God as well as love Him; we must fear to offend Him, we must fear His justice, even while we perfectly confide in the tenderness of His compassionate love. It is thus that Christians live, keeping their conscience pure from sin and hoping ever in the divine mercy. Thus they lived under the old dispensation even as under the new; and the

"mercy of God," which is but the grace of pardon and salvation brought into this world by Jesus Christ, was extended to the human race, "*a progenie in progenies*," from Adam till the Deluge, from Noah until Moses, from Moses until the Incarnation, from the Incarnation until the end of the world. Jesus Christ is the living Mercy of God the Father, and it is the office of His Church, as well as of His blessed Mother, to dispense this mercy, and to prove herself the true Mother of mercy and love.

"*Fecit potentiam in brachio suo; dispersit superbos mente cordis sui*"—"God hath showed strength with His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart." The "proud," who have rebelled against God, thus obliging Him to crush them with the strength of His arm, are, first of all, those rebel angels, with Lucifer at their head, who would neither submit nor obey; they said: "*Non serviam*"—"I will not submit" to the Son of Mary, to the Incarnate Word, to Jesus Christ; and Jesus, the "Arm of God," the omnipotent minister of the Father's will, cast them down from heaven to hell. The "proud" are also those rebellious men who set themselves up in opposition to Jesus Christ, to His Church, to His holy law, and causing earth to echo the fatal formula of hell, repeat also in their turn, either in words or in works: "I will not obey." At the last judgment the "Arm of God" will be uplifted to fall with terrible, eternal weight upon every impenitent sinner. May the sweet and lowly Virgin Mary preserve us from the curse of pride, and may the "Arm of God," the Sacred Hand of Jesus, pierced by our iniquities, never be extended over our heads except to bless us and uplift us to the bosom of the Father.

"*Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles*"—"He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble." This is but a repetition of the same thought. The "mighty" whom Jesus Christ casts down and scatters like the dust are fallen angels and sinful men, and the humble whom He exalts are those faithful Christians who suffer persecution for justice' sake, and whom the world despises because they are like their Master, meek and humble of heart.

"*Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes*"—"He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away." In this world the disciples of the Saviour must pass through the furnace of penance, tribulation, and tears. "We are fools for Christ's sake," said the Apostle St. Paul: "deceivers and yet true; unknown and yet known; dying and behold we live; chastised and

not killed; sorrowful yet always rejoicing; having nothing and possessing all things." But the worldly, who know not Jesus, do, on the contrary, appear rich while having nothing; powerful while they love only misery and vanity; happy while they have completely wandered from the path of happiness. Jesus is the only principle of true happiness, the only source of joy; He bestows His imperishable gifts upon those who, for His love, renounce the fleeting pleasures of the world; and upon that day when He shall mete out justice, those worthless treasures which men amass with so much care shall be torn forever from their failing grasp. Ah! in eternity how well we shall comprehend this twofold truth. He who has Jesus has everything, he who has not Jesus has nothing!

"*Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiæ suæ*"—"He hath upholden His servant Israel: being mindful of His mercy." In the past God chose a nation whom He treated as a favored servant and a well-beloved child; this nation, this Israel, was to give the Christ, the Lord, the Saviour, to the other nations of the world. The Blessed Virgin clearly proclaims in the Magnificat that the time has arrived, and that the day of glory has dawned upon Israel. Alas, for the unhappy Jewish nation! A small number alone comprehended this glory, opened their eyes to the light of this glorious day and reaped the blessed fruits of the mystery of mercy, of the Incarnation and Redemption of Jesus Christ. At the end of time, Israel, the prodigal child, shall return to the Father's home; Jesus, the Good Shepherd of the human race, shall receive it as He formerly received the Gentile nations, and will be mindful of His mercy, as is foretold by all the Prophets and Fathers of the Church. The Blessed Virgin, who forms the meeting-point between the Old Testament and the New, establishes and renews this consoling prophecy, the fulfilment of which commenced by the first coming of the Saviour, and will be perfectly accomplished by the conversion of the Jews. For the divine canticle terminates with these words: "*Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros: Abraham et semini ejus in secula*"—"As He spake unto our fathers: to Abraham and his seed forever." The Lord who had thus promised to Abraham that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed (viz., in the Christ who was to spring from his race), was indeed He who, now incarnate in the womb of Mary, was soon to give Himself to the world through her, and thus partly to accomplish the prophecies which He had Himself inspired, "*ad patres nostros.*" And at the end of time it will be again through Mary, the Immaculate Virgin, that Jesus Christ will complete the accom-

plishment of all that the Scriptures foretell; He will make her the channel of the grace which shall convert the Jews, and sanctify in a marvellous way the faithful of the latter days; and He will reign first here below and then in heaven with His Blessed Mother, unto all eternity, "*in secula.*"

The Magnificat is part of the Gospel of St. Luke, and is taken from the second chapter. It is a prayer which is wholly divine, and should be often sung and recited; and after Communion, when the same Lord who dwelt with Mary when she uttered this holy canticle is dwelling also in your heart, you cannot choose a better act of thanksgiving than the Magnificat.

THE LAMPS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

LIGHT has always occupied a prominent place in the worship of God. The reason of this fact is a very deep one; but as we do not wish to enter fully into the subject here, it is sufficient to say that light is the most perfect of created substances, that it is the symbol of truth which enlightens the intelligence, and that Our Lord Jesus Christ declared with His own divine lips that He was "the true Light" and the "Light of the world."

For these reasons, and many others, light has always been among Christians an integral part of their outward worship, and particularly of all that relates to the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. From the time of the Apostles, when the early Christians were forced to take refuge in the Catacombs and other secret asylums, and to hide their sacred gatherings from all eyes, lights were never omitted; and from that distant time the Church has always shown a special regard for the custom of burning lights during the celebration of the Mass and the divine offices, and also in the veneration which is paid to holy images and the relics of the martyrs.

In the Catacombs of Rome there have been found, among others, magnificent lamps in gold, silver, and brass, in the form of wreaths of flowers, in each of which were burned, before the bodies of the martyrs, a certain number of wicks, replenished day and night by the devotion of the faithful. These luminous crowns were suspended from the vaults of the chapels of the Catacombs, and honored by their brilliancy the sacred relics of those pontiffs, virgins, and martyrs who had remained faithful unto death to Jesus the Light of the World.

When, after centuries of persecution, the Church could openly dis-

play the pomp and grandeur of her ritual, light once more formed an important part of the religious ceremonial. Popes, Christians, and numbers of the faithful, following their example, brilliantly illumi nated the new churches with costly lamps, accompanied with endowments for supplying them perpetually with pure oil and light. And thus it is that, fifteen centuries after, we may still see a hundred and forty lamps surrounding, as with a brilliant aureole, the venerable tomb of the Prince of the Apostles, in the basilica of St. Peter at Rome. Forty lamps, always lighted, burn before the relics of St. Cecilia, virgin and martyr; and, indeed, relics are never exposed at Rome for the veneration of the faithful without being honored by lights.

If this is the case with the relics of the saints, we may easily conceive the solicitude with which the Church has always watched to supply at least one burning lamp before the Sacred Body of Our Lord, truly present in the Holy Eucharist; here, again, Rome proves herself the mistress of Catholic devotion, and nothing can be more striking than the effect of the seven lamps which burn in the great churches of Rome before the altar of the Blessed Sacrament.

It is indeed to be desired that everywhere, in the smallest chapel where the Adorable Body of Jesus Christ reposes, the priest and the faithful should have the means constantly to supply a lamp as a mark of their faith in the mystery of mysteries. Coldness of heart, religious indifference, and want of a lively faith must, alas! prevent any manifestation as rich and as costly as in the Holy City; but it is at least necessary that one lamp should burn night and day before the Blessed Sacrament, and thus recall to those who enter the church the Sacred Presence of Our Lord, and bear witness to the faith and devotion of His children.

In poor country parishes, where the priest with his limited means has barely sufficient to supply the wants of those around him and his own simple requirements, why should not some pious women and young girls form an association for the purpose of keeping up the lamps before the Blessed Sacrament in their parish church? One might bring a little oil, and another some wicks, and another might come morning and evening to clean and trim the lamps. The principal person in the association would receive the little subscriptions, the pennies and halfpennies, which would thus make this little work a work for all, for the poor as well as for the rich, and even for little children; and the good priest would be happy in seeing his parishioners anxious to aid him in this simple yet holy action. Soon,

without doubt, great blessings would accompany these servants of the Blessed Sacrament, and religion would flourish in desolate districts which seem abandoned by God.

The Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IX., animated by a deep and tender devotion to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, attached a particular importance to keeping lamps always lighted before the tabernacles. He even enriched with an indulgence of seven years every act of piety, whatever it might be, by which the faithful should co-operate in this good work. Thus the poor woman, the poor workman who can do no more, may gain the precious grace of indulgences by giving a drop of oil, a penny, or even a farthing, to honor the Most Holy Sacrament. May the faith and zeal of all be reanimated, and may the Blessed Sacrament of the love of God upon earth be everywhere praised, honored, and glorified!

INDULGENCES AND JUBILEES.

A JUBILEE is an indulgence.

The word indulgence is derived from the Latin, and signifies to show mercy, to abstain from severity. An indulgence is a grace which the Church grants, in the name of Jesus Christ, to repentant sinners whose sins have been already remitted in the Sacrament of Penance. After our sins are pardoned, we must still pay that debt of temporal punishment by which they must be expiated, either in this world or in purgatory. Well, an indulgence is either an entire or a partial remission of this expiation. It does not dispense us from the necessity of doing penance, but it supplies what is wanting through the imperfection of our penances.

In granting indulgences the Pope acts like the steward of some great lord, who, having received full power from his master to manage his affairs, remits the whole of an enormous debt to some debtor who in spite of all his efforts would only have been able to pay a small part.

The Pope says to us, in the name of the Son of God, "Do your best to expiate your sins and to serve God, and by the authority of Him who has said to me: 'Whatever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven,' I remit the rest of your debt which you will not be able to discharge yourself."

A jubilee is the greatest of all the indulgences which the Church grants to her children. It is a special season of grace and pardon. The word signifies joy, gladness, liberty.

Formerly a jubilee was only proclaimed every hundred years, but now, in order that all may profit by it, the Popes have changed this time to every twenty-five years. The Sovereign Pontiffs are also accustomed to grant them upon the occasion of any great joy or affliction in the Church.

The opening of a jubilee in Rome is one of the most impressive sights. The Pope goes in procession, with a long train of attendants, to the Holy Gate, which is one of the gates of the Church of St. Peter. With a silver hammer he strikes three times on the wall which holds this closed gate; the wall is then pulled down by masons, and the Holy Father passes through the first, followed by the Cardinals and the numerous procession which accompanies him. At the end of the jubilee, the Pope, having blessed the stones and cement intended to rebuild the wall, lays the first stone himself with a silver trowel, and the jubilee ends with a solemn benediction given to the immense crowd which always assists at these grand ceremonies.

The whole of this ceremonial is symbolical, like all others in the Christian worship. It signifies that the Pope, by the power he has received from God to loose from sin, really opens the gate of heaven to those who are truly humble and contrite of heart.

In order to gain the indulgence of the jubilee, we must fulfil all the works directed by the Sovereign Pontiff, and with the intention he designs.

These works are usually confession, communion, visits to some churches, fasting, and almsgiving. Each bishop publishes the jubilee in his diocese, with special regulations as to the good works required and the time for gaining the jubilee.

The almsgiving is obligatory for every one; for the poor as well as for the rich, but a penny, a farthing even, is sufficient for the poor.

The jubilee cannot be gained by the Easter Communion except by special permission from the Pope; but one confession will suffice to fulfil the Easter obligation, and also to gain the jubilee.

Those who are sick may obtain from their confessors a commutation of the fasting and the visits to the churches. Children who have not made their first communion may gain the jubilee without fasting and communion, simply by confession, almsgiving, and visiting the churches.

The indulgence of the jubilee being a grace, no one is obliged to gain it; but it would be a sin to neglect so great a benefit through indifference or incredulity.

We hope that all our readers sufficiently understand their own interest to gain their jubilee. What happiness at the moment of death to have nothing more to pay to the infinite justice of God, and to have nothing in perspective but the immediate enjoyment of the happiness of heaven!

THE SCAPULAR.

In Latin the word *scapula* means shoulder; and for many centuries the garment which all workmen wore over their clothes to preserve them from wear and from stains was called for this reason a scapular. It was formed of two wide bands of stuff which joined on the shoulders, and reached to the knees both back and front, leaving a hole in the middle for the head to pass through. But it is very long since this kind of garment was commonly worn, and the scapular has become a religious insignia established by the Carmelites in the thirteenth century. The Carmelite Order, instituted in the earlier ages of Christianity, and always characterized by a special devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, was obliged to abandon the ancient monastery of Mount Carmel in Palestine to avoid the fury of the Turks.

The Carmelite monks took refuge in Europe, where they met with many difficulties, so much so that the Order seemed about to perish, when St. Simon, their Superior, made a last appeal to Heaven to prevent this catastrophe. Redoubling his austerities and his prayers, he offered himself anew with all his brethren to the glorious Queen of heaven, entreating her to come to their aid. His confidence was well founded, and in these words the holy religious related to his brethren the result of his prayer: "My beloved brethren, blessed be God, who never abandons those who hope in Him, and does not despise the prayer of His servants; and blessed be also the Most Holy Virgin, Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who, being mindful of His mercy toward His people, makes haste to help us in the midst of the great tribulations which surround us on all sides! To me who am only dust and ashes, as I opened my heart in the presence of God, and asked the Blessed Virgin to grant some unmistakable sign of her protection and love to the ancient religious family of the Carmelites, whom she herself had honored with the title of Brethren of the Blessed Virgin Mary, . . . to me the Holy Mother of God deigned to appear, resplendent with glory, and holding in her hand a mysterious scapular: 'Receive, my son,' she said to me, 'this vest-

ment, which shall be henceforth the distinguishing mark of the Order of Mount Carmel and of my confraternity; it shall be a powerful safeguard to thee and to all thy brethren. Whoever shall live a holy life, and die a holy death wearing this sacred habit, shall avoid the flames of hell, and shall ever be accompanied by my maternal protection.'"

The religious were all eager to be invested with this scapular, which thus became the glorious livery of the Blessed Virgin; and the Sovereign Pontiffs, approving this pious institution, have enriched with many indulgences not only the Order of the Carmelites, but also a confraternity of the faithful living in the world, and wearing also, beneath their ordinary attire, the scapular of the Blessed Virgin.

It may be easily understood that it then became necessary to modify the size of the ancient scapular, and to replace it by two pieces of brown cloth, united by two cords passing over the shoulders. For us, as for the religious of Mount Carmel, the scapular is a sacred warrant of the protection of the Holy and Immaculate Mother of God, during the whole of our life, and particularly at the moment of death.

Nevertheless, in order to share in the special benedictions promised by the Blessed Virgin, and to gain the indulgences granted by the Sovereign Pontiffs, it is not sufficient merely to wear this simple insignia; it is also necessary to be invested with the scapular by a Carmelite, or a priest duly authorized by the Holy See. But it is still more necessary to remember one thing, without which it would be useless to wear all the scapulars in the world; and that is, that if you do not lead a Christian life, if you violate the commandments of God and the laws of His Church, and especially if you profane by immorality this Sacred Scapular bestowed by the most chaste, most holy, and immaculate Virgin Mary, you will not escape the terrible judgments of God, and the promises of the Blessed Mother of God will pass to others who are more worthy.

Receive if possible, and as soon as possible, the holy scapular. The priest who invests you will gladly explain more fully than I can do here the graces with which the Church has enriched the Carmelite Confraternity, and particularly the numerous indulgences attached to it. Among others there is a plenary indulgence to be gained upon the day of reception.

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL APPEARING TO ST. SIMON STOCK.

"RECEIVE THIS HABIT AS A PLEDGE OF MY SPECIAL PROTECTION."

Feast of the Holy Scapular

PRAYER AND EPISTLE

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PRAYER

GOD, who hast honored the Order of Carmelites with the particular title of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Thy Mother, mercifully grant that, protected by her prayer whose commemoration we thus celebrate with a solemn office, we may deserve to arrive at joy everlasting. Who livest. Amen.

EPISTLE

(*Ecclus. xxiv. 23-31*).

As the vine, I have brought forth a pleasant odor; and my flowers are the fruit of honor and riches. I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope. In me is all grace of the way and of the truth; in me is all hope of life and of virtue. Come over to me, all ye who desire me, and be filled with my fruits. For my spirit is sweet above honey, and my inheritance above honey and the honeycomb. My memory is unto everlasting generations. They that eat me shall yet hunger; and they that drink me shall yet thirst. He that harkeneth to me, shall not be confounded; and they that work by me, shall not sin. They that explain me, shall have life everlasting.—*Goffine.*

PRAYER TO OBTAIN A GOOD DEATH

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. O refuge of sinners, Mother of the agonizing, do not abandon us in the hour of our death, but obtain for us perfect sorrow, sincere contrition, remission of our sins, a worthy reception of the Most Holy Viaticum, the strengthening effect of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, that we may present ourselves with security before the throne of the just but otherwise merciful Judge, our God and Redeemer. Amen.

Our Holy Father, Pius IX., by a rescript, March 11th, 1856, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this prayer to obtain a good death:

AN INDULGENCE OF ONE HUNDRED DAYS, once a day.—*Raccolta, p. 407.*

THE THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS.

ST. FRANCIS of Assisi and St. Dominic were raised up by divine mercy at the beginning of the thirteenth century to sustain the Church, shaken for more than two hundred years by the impious wars waged by the emperors and kings who called themselves Christian, against the Sovereign Pontiffs, the vicars of Jesus Christ, the supreme heads of the Holy Church, and the divinely appointed defenders of the true liberty of nations, as well as of the true authority of princes. In the midst of all these troubles, a certain laxity gradually crept into discipline and morals, and it became day by day more necessary that God should raise up in the midst of His people heroic souls capable of uniting all the elements of resurrection and of salutary reform, and rendering them victorious.

St. Dominic, a Spaniard by birth, was sent by Our Lord to accomplish the first half of this great task; St. Francis of Assisi, who merited by his heavenly life the title of Seraphic, accomplished the second, and, with his holy friend, renewed the face of the earth.

St. Francis was born at Assisi, a little town of the Papal States, toward the end of the twelfth century. He was smitten with a holy love for evangelical poverty; he gave up all his possessions, humiliated and annihilated himself according to the example of his Saviour, changed his rich garments for a coarse woollen habit, girded himself with a cord, and, going forth barefooted as a poor religious of Jesus Christ, having for his only riches Jesus in his heart, he began preaching penance everywhere, and soon saw gathering round him, not only hundreds, but thousands and thousands of disciples, who walked with enthusiasm in his steps, and recalled, by their austere and angelical life, the life of the early Christians. The Pope, in approving the idea of the seraphic Father Francis, named these new religious *Fraters minores* (the Little Brothers). The Gospel was their only rule: poverty, humility, meekness, penance, simplicity, indefatigable zeal for the salvation of others, and especially for the sanctification of the poor and lowly, an absolute allegiance to the Sovereign Pontiff and the Church, a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and, above all, an excess of love for the sweet Saviour Jesus, the King of the Church and the Light of the world: such was their spirit.

The good St. Francis, aided by St. Clare of Assisi, had established for women the same institute of penance, and the converts of these

Daughters of Poverty, afterward called the Poor Clares, multiplied rapidly.

St. Francis was inspired to found a third Order of Penance for Christians living in the world, both priests and laity, that they also might participate individually in the spirit of evangelical renovation and religious sanctification which produced such marvellous fruits in the convents of the Poor Clares and the monasteries of the Friars Minor. This is what is called the Third Order of St. Francis, which has been solemnly approved by the Holy See; it was rapidly propagated throughout all the countries of the Catholic world, and, for six centuries and a half, it has enrolled within its ranks millions of holy souls.

Nothing can be more simple than the rule of the Third Order of St. Francis: intended for all conditions of the secular life, instituted for the rich as well as for the poor, for ecclesiastics and for military men, for merchants and for women in society; fitted for all ages; it is adapted, like the Gospel itself, to all our necessities of position, health, and fortune. Besides the fact that it imposes no obligation under pain of sin, it accommodates itself to all particular cases, owing to the permission given by the Holy Founder to all the Fathers of the First Order, and also to the confessor of each Tertiary, to commute the different requirements according to circumstances. Indeed, the one thing needful in the Third Order is the Spirit—the spirit of penance, the spirit of detachment and Christian poverty, the spirit of simplicity and love in religion; while the practices and means pointed out by the rule are only of secondary importance, and completely subordinate to the principal object. I will even add that, society being what it is, there are few people living in the world who can exactly observe all the rule of the Third Order. Therefore, if it is evident that, owing to your health or the requirements of your position, you can only observe a part of this rule, must you therefore refrain from entering the Third Order? Certainly not; from the moment in which you desire to do all you can, from the moment that St. Francis sees in your heart the will to do penance and to love our dear Lord truly, he opens his heart to you, he holds out his arms to you, and calls you into the sacred ranks of his Third Order, which will strengthen your holy aspirations and bring them to perfection.

As regards corporal penance, the rule imposes three obligations. First, to wear always night and day the woollen scapular and the cord of St. Francis. No one can be dispensed from this first obliga-

tion, which cannot affect the health. Second, to abstain on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. Third, to fast on Friday. Many Tertiaries cannot fulfil these two last conditions. They obtain a dispensation, and their confessor imposes some other work of piety or mortification by which they may satisfy the obligation; for instance, to assist at mass, to say six Paters, Aves, and Glorias for the souls in Purgatory, of which we shall speak presently, or to give alms, or to go to communion for that intention, etc. As regards prayers, the rule imposes upon Tertiaries who can read the daily recital of the little office of the Blessed Virgin according to the Roman Ritual; and upon those who cannot read, a certain number of Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

The little office is also often commuted to shorter and easier prayers; some decades of the Rosary for instance, or the daily recitation of the Miserere, with the arms extended in the form of a cross, etc. Priests and religious satisfy by their office, directing their intention.

Incomparable graces ever accompany the children of St. Francis. The Church has crowned them with benedictions, and has opened to them with incredible bounty the treasure of her indulgences. A plenary indulgence on the day of reception, a plenary indulgence at the hour of death, a daily plenary indulgence for the recitation of the chaplet of St. Francis, consisting of seven decades and three Hail Marys, in memory of the seventy-three years of the Blessed Virgin's life; a plenary indulgence also for the recitation of thirty-three Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, in memory of the thirty-three years of Our Lord's life on earth; a plenary indulgence to those who approach Holy Communion on the Feasts of Our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, of the Apostles, and of all the Saints of the Order, who are very numerous, sometimes twelve and fifteen in a month; and lastly, a number of plenary and partial indulgences, given in the Manual of the Third Order, among which are the six Paters, Aves, and Glorias, to the recitation of which the Holy See has deigned to attach all the plenary and partial indulgences of the Sanctuaries of the Holy Land and the Churches of Rome. These indulgences are so extensive that it is impossible to enumerate them.

Every Tertiary may gain them many times a day, as often as he shall recite with devotion these six Paters, Aves, and Glorias, for the intentions of the Pope, the needs of the Church, and in honor of the seraphic St. Francis. This is what is called the great pardon. Almost all the indulgences of the Third Order are applicable to the souls in Purgatory. Our Lord promised St. Francis that his triple

spiritual family should endure to the end of the world. At the time that he received the sacred stigmata of the crucifixion upon Mount Alverno, he was wrapt in ecstasy during the whole night, in a grotto where he went to pray. His companion and cherished disciple, whom he loved to call "the little sheep of God," because of his meekness and innocence, surprised him in the midst of this great ecstasy. Hearing him speak, and seeing the reflection of the heavenly light which filled the grotto, Brother Leo ventured to advance toward the opening, and was thus the happy witness of the wonders of that sacred night. His seraphic father, lifted from the earth as though suspended in the air, seemed enveloped in an immense flame which lighted up all the interior of the cavern; he spoke, and a voice answered him; but Brother Leo could not understand the mysterious words. . . . Having remarked three different times that St. Francis put his hand in his bosom as if to take something out, and afterward offered it in the flame to Him who spoke to him, Brother Leo acknowledged to his good father quite simply the next morning that he had seen what had passed, and, asking him to forgive his presumption, begged him to explain it. "Brother Leo," answered St. Francis, "Brother Leo, little sheep of God, since thou hast surprised my secret, I will tell thee all. The divine flame which enveloped me during the night was the Holy Ghost, and in the midst of it my Saviour Jesus Christ deigned to appear to me, and to speak to me familiarly, as a friend speaking to his friend. . . . He said to me, 'Francis, give Me all thou hast;' and I answered: 'O my sweet Lord, I have nothing left; I have renounced everything for Thy love; I have nothing but this poor torn robe; wouldst Thou that I should give it Thee?' And then He commanded me to put my hand in my breast and give Him all I should find. I obeyed, and found to my great surprise a beautiful piece of gold, which I presented to Him immediately: 'How can it be?' I said, 'I believed that I had nothing.' 'Seek again,' replied my Lord; and I sought and found a second piece of gold, which I gave Him like the first. And yet a third time He told me to seek, and I found and gave to Him. And when I uttered my surprise at finding gold in my possession who had made myself His own poor servant for His love, Jesus said to me: 'Because thou hast given Me everything, I give everything to thee. Thou hast given Me three families of faithful disciples: as a reward I give three promises to thee to-day. First, thy three Orders shall endure until the end of the world; secondly, at the hour of death I will assist with special love all those who shall belong to them:

thirdly, I will bless and love all who shall love them.' It was thus that my Lord spoke to me. But say nothing, Brother Leo, until the day when it shall be necessary to speak."

Such is the Third Order of St. Francis of Assisi, the great religious family into which all faithful souls desirous of obtaining true sanctification in the midst of the temptations of the world are lovingly invited.

Pius IX. was a Tertiary of St. Francis. Many cardinals, bishops, princes, and princesses have enjoyed, and still enjoy, the same happiness. St. Louis, St. Ferdinand, king of Spain, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Margaret of Cortona, St. Francis of Sales, the Venerable Abbé Olier, founder of the seminaries in France, and a number of great men, warriors, artists, and poets, have been Tertiaries of St. Francis. Michael Angelo was a Tertiary, and also Dante, who desired to be buried in the habit of St. Francis. The holiest priest of the time, the saintly Curé d'Ars, belonged to this Order. France, Italy, and Spain are filled with Tertiaries, and even the most distant missions are reaping this spiritual advantage, and behold, beneath the shadow of the cross, newly planted by the Franciscan Fathers, great numbers of the faithful enrolling themselves under the banner of the seraphic patriarch!

But at the present time, more especially, the Third Order should be honored and loved by the true children of God. It is directly opposed to all the evils of the day, and its spirit, which is the spirit of the Gospel and the Church, is a direct antidote to that fatal influence which the enemies of the Catholic faith desire to represent as the spirit of social and religious progress. Modern society will have nothing to do with penance, especially with outward and corporal penance: it speaks of nothing but pleasure and luxury, of commerce and money-making; the dream of the age is of liberty and independence, falsely so called; while it is losing day by day the spirit of Christianity, the spirit of Catholicity, of reverence for the Holy See, and for ecclesiastical, secular, and paternal authority; and increasing every day in pride, self-sufficiency, and egotism. . . . St. Francis presents to us in the Third Order the immediate remedy, the counterpoise, to all these deplorable tendencies: a Christian life, penitent and seriously penitent; detachment from worldly vanities, and principally from money, the god of the age; simplicity in the midst of worldly employments, humility and obedience; practical devotion to the Sovereign Pontiff, and respect for all legitimate authority, whether in the Church, the State, or the family; Christian love for

the poor and lowly—in a word, the spirit of the Gospel, the spirit of faith, of love to our blessed Lord, to His adorable Sacrament, and to His Immaculate Mother.*

* Any one desiring to enter the Third Order need only apply to one of the Capuchin or Franciscan Fathers, who will give the postulant all necessary details, and receive him first as a novice, and afterward as a Tertiary. If there are no Franciscans within reach to whom you can apply, it would be sufficient to write to the Rev. Father Provincial of the Capuchins or Franciscans, and ask him to delegate any priest you may name to perform the ceremony of admission.

FIFTH PART

THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS.

A MIRACLE is an outward fact which evidently surpasses the forces of nature. It is the extraordinary exercise of God's almighty power in the world.

To deny the possibility of miracles is to deny the power of God, and consequently His existence.

Miracles being the seal of divinity, if Jesus Christ were God, He must have worked miracles. And we may ask of Him, like the Jews of old: "What miracles doest Thou that we may believe?"

We need not fear to apply this test, for the public life of Our Lord was an uninterrupted succession of miracles.

The divine recital of all His marvellous works constitutes the Gospel; and the most important and the most solemn of all is, perhaps, the resurrection of Lazarus.

Lazarus was a rich man, much loved by Jesus, and the brother of Martha and Mary Magdalen; he lived at Bethania, which was fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, and often offered hospitality to the Saviour and His Apostles.

Now, Lazarus fell seriously sick, and his sisters, seeing that his life was in danger, sent to tell Jesus, who was then in Galilee, and said to Him: "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus answered: "This sickness is not unto death, but that the Son of God may be glorified by it." Notwithstanding the love that Our Lord bore to Lazarus and his sisters, He remained in the same place two days; then He said to His disciples: "Let us go into Judea again: Lazarus our friend sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." His disciples therefore said: "If he sleep, he shall do well;" and Jesus answered: "Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe."

When Jesus arrived at Bethania, Lazarus had been dead for four days, and was already laid in the tomb. Martha and Mary were overwhelmed with grief, and were sitting at home and weeping. Their friends and relations were still with them, trying to console

them; but Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, rose immediately and went to meet Him, crying: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!" And Jesus said to her, "Thy brother shall rise again." "I know," she answered, "that he shall rise again at the last day." "I," said the Christ, "am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live: and every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die forever. Believest thou this?" "Yea, Lord," cried the faithful Martha, "I have believed that Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who art come into this world." And she left Him to call her sister. And Mary, rising immediately, came in her turn and fell at the feet of Jesus. "O Lord," she said to Him also, "if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." And when Jesus saw her weep, and the Jews who had come with her, He was deeply moved, and, His Sacred Heart being touched with divine compassion, He said to them, "Where have you laid him?" They answered, "Lord, come and see."

And "Jesus wept." . . .

The Jews therefore said, "Behold, how He loved him!" but others added murmuring: "Could not He that opened the eyes of the man born blind have caused that this man should not die?" Jesus therefore, again groaning in Himself, cometh to the sepulchre; and it was a cave hewn out of the rock, and a large stone closed up the entrance. Jesus saith, "Take away the stone." But Martha answered, "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he has been dead four days." "Did not I say to thee," replied the Saviour, "that if thou believe, thou shalt see the glory of God?"

When the stone was rolled away, Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven, and cried with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth." And he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands, and his face bound about with a napkin.

And many of the Jews who were present believed in Jesus Christ, and this miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus was spoken of throughout Jerusalem and in all Judea. The enemies of the Saviour were consequently enraged against Him, and they assembled together at Jerusalem at the house of the high-priest Caiphas, saying: "What shall we do? This Man doth many miracles, and if we let Him alone, all will believe in Him."

Neither the Jews nor the Pagans of that time ever thought of denying the miracles of Jesus Christ; if they could have done so they certainly would, as that would have been the simplest means of up-

rooting the Christian faith from the very commencement. But how could they deny facts accomplished in the broad daylight, in the very walls of Jerusalem, or in the largest towns of Judea, in the presence of a multitude of people, and under the very eyes of the enemies of the Saviour?

Therefore Jesus Christ worked miracles to prove His divinity to the world.

Like unto those reasonable and faithful Jews who believed in Him during the time of His mortal life, let us prostrate ourselves in deep humility at the Sacred Feet of our adorable Master, who became man only for love of us, who thus annihilated Himself and suffered and died only by a miracle of mercy. Let us believe in Him, and lead a pure, innocent life, a truly holy life, a truly Christian life; let us give glory to God, and save our souls for all eternity. But more than all, you who are miserably dead in mortal sin, with souls more terribly corrupt than was the dead body of Lazarus, hear now the Sacred Voice of the world's Redeemer calling to you: "Come forth!" Arise quickly while there is yet time. Jesus is as powerful to save as when He stood weeping by the grave of Lazarus, and He is calling you even now to a joyful resurrection.

THE BLIND MAN OF JERICHO.

THERE are two species of sight: the sight of the body and the sight of the soul. The second is still more necessary than the first, and the worst form of blindness is not that which is the most pitied. There is no sightlessness so terrible as that which prevents a man from knowing God, which renders Jesus Christ invisible to the soul, and gives an utter darkness instead of the glorious sunshine of the light of faith. A recent statistic shows that, in France, to every nine hundred men there is one blind. If God would give us His statistics, He who reads the heart, how terrible in proportion would be the numbers of the spiritually blind!

Jesus Christ has said of Himself: "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Jesus is the Light of the soul, just as the sun is the light of the body; the spiritually blind are they who do not know Jesus, who do not believe in Jesus, who do not adore Jesus, who do not follow Him, who do not love Him; these are they who are truly blind, and stumble on through ever-deepening shadows. Bodily blindness is surely less sad, since it only closes the eyes to the day

light during the fleeting years of our earthly pilgrimage. Our Lord cured many blind men during the course of His miracles, in order to teach us that He is the Divine Physician and the light of poor blind souls. Let us listen to the touching recital of one of these miraculous cures.

It is related in the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St Mark that the Son of God, a few days before His Passion, went up from Jericho to Jerusalem. Jericho, the schismatic and infidel town, is a symbol of sin; Jerusalem, the city of God, the city of the Temple, the city of Christ, is a symbol of grace. A great number of people followed Jesus, being drawn by Him from Jericho to Jerusalem, from the death of sin to the life of grace. At the head of this great multitude were the Apostles of Jesus, His Priests, by whose sacred ministry He has continued to save the souls of men since He Himself ascended up to heaven.

"And Bartimeus the blind man sat by the wayside begging."

And when he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he began to cry out and to say: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."

This beggar is a type of all of us who are spiritually blind, and have lost the light of faith, whether from the effects of an irreligious training, or the contagious examples of religious indifference, or from the influence of dangerous and heretical books. Deprived of this light, shut out from consolation, we stand desolately by the wayside, and no one in the world can change our darkness into light but Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Creator of the world. A religious resurrection is taking place among us; it is Jesus who is passing by. Let us call upon Him with our whole hearts, and ask Him to take pity upon us. Jesus, Son of David, Jesus, Son of God, Jesus, our true Saviour, have mercy upon us.

And some of the multitude, weary of the cries of Bartimeus, told him to hold his peace. But the poor man cried the more, "Jesus, have mercy on me!" Many are the evil influences which hold us back from God, many are the false teachers who strive to turn us from Him, and who, with presumptuous doctrines, shallow knowledge, and false conclusions, lead away the ignorant and unlearned. Let us not listen, but acknowledge that we are blind and miserable, that we have no peace or joy in our hearts, that we have nothing to comfort us in all the trials of life; let us call upon our God; let us beseech Him to come to our aid, crying, "Lord, save us. Jesus, have mercy on us." Our merciful Lord did not remain insensible to

the cries of Bartimeus. He commanded His disciples to bring him to Him. The blind man, full of hope, threw off his mantle and ran to Our Lord; and Jesus having asked him, "What wilt thou that I should do to thee?" he replied, "Rabboni, that I may see." And Jesus said to him, "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." And immediately the blind man recovered his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

Let us do the same, and we shall be healed. Let us rise and cast aside our mantle, the unlovely garment of our past iniquities, the unholy garment of coldness and indifference which envelopes us like a winding-sheet. Let us rise and cast ourselves with humble confidence at the feet of those who are the depositaries of the spiritual power of the Saviour, at the feet of the priests who have received from Him the power to pardon sins and to reconcile us to God. Let us go to the Priest and ask him to instruct us in our duties, to teach us to know God, to love Him and to serve Him. Let us confess our faults, and repent of them sincerely; and, after the sweet and powerful absolution has been given us, we shall hear the divine Voice of our Redeemer saying to our hearts, "Go in peace; thy faith hath made thee whole."

And following the example of Bartimeus, healed and wholly changed, we shall bless the holy name of our patient and merciful God, and shall prove the sincerity of our gratitude by entering the ranks of His disciples, by becoming true Christian men, pure and devout, without fear and without pride, faithful unto death; and by walking with unfaltering footsteps in the road which leads to Jerusalem, which leads us ever upward to our own true paradise above.

THE MAN BORN BLIND.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, when walking one day through the streets of Jerusalem, met a beggar blind from his birth. His Apostles and His disciples asked Him if this poor man had lost his sight as a punishment for his own sins or for the sins of his parents. "Neither," replied the Saviour; he is born blind "that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Having said these words, "He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon the sightless eyes of the beggar, and said to him: Go wash in the pool of Siloe." In appearance the remedy was worse than the evil: clay or mud in the eyes, and then a bath of common water in one of the public fountains of Jerusalem, was it not a mockery? Was it possible that one born blind should by such means recover the organ

of sight? But the thoughts of God are not the thoughts of men, and divine Providence often employs even that which is evil to produce great good, and uses the most insufficient and, as it seems, contrary means by which to carry out His merciful designs.

The blind man obeyed Jesus Christ; he went in haste to the fountain of Siloe (which signifies in Hebrew, of the Messiah), he took water, washed his eyes, and returned seeing. His friends and neighbors, who had known him from his childhood, and had always seen him blind, were struck with astonishment, and asked in bewilderment: "Is not this he that sat and begged?" Some, knowing him perfectly, exclaimed, "This is he;" and others, "No, but it is like him." And the beggar answered both: "I am he." Then they surrounded him on all sides, and said to him: "How were thy eyes opened?" And he answered: "That Man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and said to me: 'Go to the pool of Siloe and wash.' And I went, I washed, and I see." And it was the Sabbath day, the great day of rest among the Jews, and they brought him that had been blind to the Pharisees.* And they questioned him in their turn, asking him how he had recovered his sight, and he replied once more: "Jesus put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see." And a dispute arose among the Pharisees, some saying, "This man is not of God who keepeth not the Sabbath;" and the others, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" Then they asked the beggar what he himself thought of Him who had cured him, and he answered: "He is a prophet."

The Pharisees, fearing the consequences of the miracle, next endeavored to raise doubts as to the real sightlessness of the beggar. They called his parents, and said to them: "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then doth he now see?" And they answered: "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now seeth we know not: or who hath opened his eyes we know not: ask himself; he is of age, let him speak for himself." They were afraid to answer more positively, for they knew how bitterly the Pharisees hated Jesus, and they feared to declare that He was the Messiah lest they should be driven out of the synagogue.

Not knowing what more they could do, they called again the man who had been blind: "Give glory to God," they said. "We know that this man is a sinner." "If He be a sinner," replied the beggar,

*The Pharisees were a religious sect strictly attached to all the outward observances of the law of Moses, but they were proud, stern men, who set little importance upon the sanctification of the heart.

"I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." "What did He to thee?" they repeated with anger and spite: "how did He open thy eyes?" "I have told you already," he answered, "and you have heard; why would you hear it again? Will you also become His disciples?" "Be thou His disciple!" they cried with fury: "we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses: but as to this man, we know not whence He is." "Herein is a wonderful thing," replied the beggar, "that you know not from whence He is, and He hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God doth not hear sinners: but if a man be a server of God and doth His will, him He heareth. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man were of God He could not do anything." "Thou art wholly born in sin, and dost thou teach us?" they exclaimed angrily, and they cast him out.

Some time after Our Lord met him, and said to him: "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him: "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee." And the beggar, full of joy, exclaimed, "I believe, Lord;" and falling down at the feet of the Saviour, he adored Him.

Let us do the same, we to whom Jesus has come to bring the light of eternal truth, the light of the true faith, infinitely more precious than the light of day. Let us obey the commands of Jesus and of His Church, like unto the beggar who found in obedience a perfect cure. Let us go to the fountain of Siloe, to the spiritual fountain of the Messiah, and purify our souls in the sacred bath of penance. Cleansed by the humble acknowledgment of our sins, and by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, we shall feel our faith grow day by day more luminous and untroubled. We shall be able to resist the attacks of the irreligious, the subtle and dangerous influence of the sceptical, and the derision of those who scoff at our holy faith. We shall glory in being the disciples of Jesus, and when saddened by the wickedness and incredulity of men, or by griefs and troubles of our own, we may find an unfailing consolation at the foot of the tabernacle, where Jesus Himself reposes in the Sacrament of His love. There we shall hear our dear Lord, our divine Teacher, Consoler, and Friend, speaking to our hearts the very words which filled the blind man of the Gospel with joy; and in perfect gratitude, lowly adoration, and, more than all, with fervent love, we shall answer and say to Jesus, "*Credo. Domine*"—"Lord, I believe"

THE RISEN JESUS AND MARY MAGDALEN.

MARY MAGDALEN had left everything to follow her divine Master. She had sold all her possessions, which were considerable, and had distributed her wealth among the poor; a holy and austere life had succeeded the life of sinful pleasure which had been her ruin; and in the pure companionship of the Blessed Virgin she had speedily risen to a sublime degree of Christian sanctity. Mary had taken her with her to Calvary, where Magdalen, more courageous than the Apostles, intrepid in her fidelity, and unwavering in her faith, had been present during the long hours of agony of Him who had come down to earth to seek and to save the lost. She had helped the Mother of Sorrows to receive the precious burden of the inanimate body of Jesus, after the lance of Longinus had pierced His sacred side; and lastly, she had been among the train of mourners who had laid within the holy sepulchre the divine Conqueror of death.

After the funeral ceremony, the Jews, who knew well the solemn prediction so often repeated of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, took every means to guard His sacred Body with jealous care, hoping thus to prove the imposture of the Crucified. The living rock in which the sepulchre was hollowed had no outlet; they had closed the entrance by rolling before it an enormous stone, upon which they had set the seal of the temple; and chosen guards, relieved from hour to hour, took away every fear of treachery.

On the third day, the day following the Sabbath, at the rising of the sun, the rock was shaken, and an angel of light came down from heaven, and rolled away the stone. . . . The terrified guards fell back with fear, then speedily took flight. The Holy Sepulchre was open and empty; the Almighty Lord, Jesus, the Son of God, the Eternal King, the Victorious Redeemer, had risen, and had conquered Death and Hell!

Magdalen, overwhelmed by bitter grief, left her home at the dawn of day, carrying with her precious perfumes, sweet spices, and aromatics to complete the embalming of the Sacred Body of her Master, having as yet only a very vague idea of what Jesus Christ meant when speaking of His resurrection.

When she reached the Holy Sepulchre she was astonished to find it empty and unguarded. Putting down her perfumes, she leant over the opening to the cave into which a few steps, cut out of the rock, led down. The Body of Jesus was there no longer; the fine

linen clothes, in which St. Joseph of Arimathea had wrapped Him round, were laid within, and by the side an angel in a shining white robe was sitting. "Woman," said he to Magdalen, "why weepest thou? Why seek you the living with the dead? The Lord is not here, but is risen. Go tell His disciples and Peter." Magdalen, bewildered with grief, did not rightly understand these words; she remained near the tomb still weeping, persuaded that they had taken away the Sacred Body of her Lord and Master.

Jesus, who always comforts those who weep for love of Him, and who always comes to those who invoke Him with a pure and sincere heart, appeared close to the Sepulchre. Magdalen, hearing steps behind her, turned, and exclaimed without reflection: "If thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him: and I will take Him away." She thought it might be the gardener or some one at work there in the early morning. Then Jesus approached her, and said to her "Mary!" At the sound of that adored voice, Magdalen raised her eyes, recognized the Christ, and, falling at His Feet, cried, with rapture and love, "Rabboni" (Master). She desired to kiss His Sacred Feet; but Jesus prevented her. "Do not touch Me," He said, "for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say to them: I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God." Now did a divine light illumine all at once the mind of Mary Magdalen, not only showing her who it was that stood before her, but also clearing away, for the first time, the clouds which up to the present had surrounded the mysteries of His death and resurrection. The love, most pure but yet too human, which had filled her heart, was now united to that supernatural spiritual love which is the love of God. And the flames of this divine charity completed her purification, and rendered her the greatest of female saints, after the most pure and holy Virgin Mary, who is the true Mother of God, the Queen of angels and of men, immeasurably exalted above all the creatures who have come forth from the hands of the great Creator.

ZACHEUS.

On Thursday, the 7th of April, in the third year of His preaching, the Saviour, followed by His Apostles, approached the town of Jericho.

In this town lived a rich man of a noble race named Zacheus. Allured by the desire of gain, Zacheus, an Israelite by birth, had

entered the service of the Roman Emperor, and had received from Tiberias the important and lucrative post of chief of the publicans. This employment had brought him into great disrepute among the Jews; for publicans, being charged to collect the taxes which swelled the coffers of Tiberias Cæsar, were guilty of all manner of frauds and exactions, which naturally rendered them odious.

The whole population was moved at the news of the approach of Jesus Christ; a considerable crowd collected to meet Him outside the gates of the town. Urged by curiosity, Zacheus had done like others; but, owing to his low stature, all his efforts to see the Christ who was passing by were useless, until at last he resolved to go on in advance of the multitude, and to climb up into one of the sycamores which grew by the wayside. Jesus, having reached the place, looking up saw him, and said to him: "Zacheus, make haste and come down: for this day I must abide in thy house." Zacheus, struck with astonishment to find himself thus recognized by One who had never seen him, and doubtless moved by divine grace, hastened to obey. He went forward to his dwelling, and received Jesus with great joy.

In the presence of all, regardless of human respect, and full of humility, faith, and repentance, Zacheus prostrated himself at the feet of the Saviour, saying: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold." And Jesus said to him: "This day is salvation come to this house: because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world, the good Shepherd of lost sheep, the divine Consoler of the afflicted and repentant, and in His Sacred Heart those whom the world hates and despises may ever find a certain refuge. He loves sinners, and by this merciful and compassionate love He changes their hearts, drives away sin, and, by planting in its stead His divine grace, restores to them peace and holiness.

We are all like unto Zacheus, since we are all sinners, immeasurably attached to the things of this world and careless about eternity. Jesus and His Church are ever passing through our midst; all are present, but few are touched; these few are Christians, true Christians, the little flock of faithful disciples, of sincere penitents, who correspond to the grace of Jesus and receive Him with joy into their house, or rather into their hearts, by frequent communion.

Zacheus was low of stature; in order to see Jesus he was obliged to climb up into a sycamore. And we, too, cannot go alone to God

without using those means which He has placed in His goodness on our pathway to supply what is wanting to our weakness. We must have recourse to the ministry of the pastors of the Church; we must listen to their teaching, and be docile to their voice: it is to them that we must confess our sins in deep humility; we must follow their religious guidance, and receive from their consecrated hands the divine Communion, the Sacred Bread of eternal life.

Like Zacheus we must rejoice in being Christians, and the service of our God must be our happiness and glory. We must fearlessly observe not only the commandments of God and of the Church, but the counsels of evangelical perfection; we must love God and the poor, and strive to merit from our just and merciful Creator the benediction which Zacheus received: "This day is salvation come to thee. . . . This day I must abide in thy house!"

THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALEN.

MARY, surnamed Magdalen (from the name of some property she possessed in the town of Magdala, upon the borders of the Sea of Galilee), was the youngest sister of Lazarus and Martha, who are ever to be honored and remembered for the holy friendship which bound them to Our Lord. Lazarus and Martha had always faithfully obeyed the laws of God; but their young sister had yielded to temptation, and fallen miserably into sin.

One day, in the midst of a life of depravity, she heard speak of Jesus, of His miracles, of His goodness, of His perfect holiness, of His mercy to sinners. Attracted by curiosity and by an undefinable feeling of repentance, the poor sinner drew near to the Saviour, listened to His stern, sweet words, and received from Him a benediction which prepared the way for her conversion. Some time after, Our Lord arrived at Capharnaum, near to Magdala, and remained there for many days, preaching to the people those sacred and divine truths which are summed up in the Gospel under the name of the Sermon on the Mount. The Blessed Virgin, St. Martha, and the other holy women who followed Jesus and provided for His necessities brought Mary Magdalen a second time to the Source of life. The first words of Jesus had made her tremble and yet filled her with hope, and these humbled her to the dust. But she dared not cast herself yet at His feet, but, returning to her house, she dismissed all the sinful and worldly companions by whom she had been sur-

rounded, took a vase of costly perfume, and with tears fast falling, and insensible to human respect, she set forth in haste to the house of a certain Pharisee of Capharnaum, named Simon, who had invited our divine Lord to supper in his sumptuous home.

When Magdalen entered the banquet-hall, she found Jesus surrounded by Pharisees, who were watching all His actions and marking all His words, perfidiously seeking some grounds upon which to accuse Him at the great council of the Jews at Jerusalem. Magdalen seemed to see and hear nothing but her Saviour. She cast herself at His feet, kissed them with love, bathed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Jesus said nothing and did not even appear to notice her. Simon and his friends looked on in ironical astonishment. "This man, if He were a prophet," they said within themselves, "would know surely who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him, that she is a sinner." And then, at last, Jesus broke the silence. "Simon," said He, gravely and sweetly, turning to His host, "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee." "Master, say it," replied the Pharisee. "A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, the other fifty. And whereas they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which, therefore, of the two loveth him most?" "I suppose," answered Simon, "that he to whom he forgave most." "Thou hast judged rightly," replied the Saviour, and turning to the poor sinful woman, He asked, "Dost thou see this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she with her tears hath washed My feet, and with her hair hath wiped them. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she with ointment hath anointed My feet. Wherefore I say to thee, Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much." "What does He say?" murmured the disconcerted Pharisees; "He blasphemeth. None can forgive sins but God alone." But Jesus, without paying any regard to these murmurs, looked on Magdalen with divine compassion: "Thy sins are forgiven thee," He said, "thy faith hath made thee safe; go in peace!"

And Magdalen the sin-defiled—Magdalen the woman who had been shunned, despised, condemned, and whose life had been a scandal and a by-word, a contamination and a reproach, rose from the feet of her Redeemer crowned with the grace of God, and possessing, in her deep repentance and in the love of Jesus Christ, a treasure no less precious than the innocence she had lost.

Blessed are the sinful who go in confidence to the feet of Jesus, and weep there for the sins which have separated them from Him! Blessed are those sincere and humble penitents who kneel down at the feet of the priest, the representative of Jesus, the depositary of the divine power to pardon sins, by whom He still continues His sacerdotal ministry on earth! Blessed are they who hear those words of divine forgiveness which are uttered even now over heads bowed down in true repentance: "I absolve thee from thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!"

"I have never been so happy in my life!" exclaimed a young man who had at last confessed the sins which had long weighed heavily upon his conscience.

There is no happiness, no light-heartedness, that can be compared to the peace that follows sin forgiven. Will you not test the truth of this assertion, you who read these lines, and are perhaps living far from God?

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

During the three years of His public teaching, Our Lord frequently entered into the Temple. One day He was with His Apostles in one of the halls leading into the sanctuary, and called the treasury, because the alms of those who went in to prayer were received in a kind of box placed there for that purpose. Here Our Lord paused for a few minutes, watching those who passed through, and noticing the alms which they cast in.

Many rich men cast their gifts generously into the treasury. A poor widow came and gave two small pieces of money equal to one farthing. When she was gone into the Temple, the Son of God turned to His disciples, and said: "Verily, I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these have of their abundance cast into the offerings of God: but she of her want hath cast in all the living that she had."

Are not these divine words very consoling for those who gain their bread by the work of their hands, who possess nothing but what is necessary, and yet desire to help those who are more unfortunate than themselves? The widow's mite is an evident proof that all men, the poor as well as the rich, are called by our Father in heaven to fulfil the great and holy law of almsgiving. The rich, in order to accomplish the will of God, should give much and should give gladly; the poor should give a little, and, as they know by experi-

ence all the hardships of poverty, it is scarcely necessary to add that the little they give should be given ungrudgingly.

The poor widow in the Gospel, when casting in her two mites, did not surely give much, yet God Himself declares to us that her alms were of greater value than the abundant offerings of the rich who had preceded her. God does not weigh the actions of men by the same measure as we do. In all our actions He seeks, and specially desires, purity of intention, love, charity, and self-abnegation. The outward action, although it has its own importance, is nevertheless only secondary, and thus the law of Christian equality among men ever subsists in the sight of God, notwithstanding the diversity of rank, fortune, and social position.

We live in an age when, thanks be to God, fraternal charity seems to be increasing every day. Under the direction of the bishops and priests, the true friends of the poor, and the divinely appointed consolers of all human misery, charitable Catholic institutions are rising on all sides. In town as well as country, associations of men or women devote themselves to visiting the poor and the sick; they shelter the destitute, the orphans, the aged, and the fallen; they give bread to those who have none, and thus fulfil the great law of Christianity. It would be exceedingly ungrateful not to recognize this, and to give ear to the false accusations and libellous assertions made by those contentious spirits who desire to rouse the poor against the rich, and who are themselves at war with religion and with all the laws of society. With very rare exceptions, the rich give constantly and give generously; but it is not necessary, I repeat, to be rich in order to be charitable. The honest workman who, seeing his comrade out of work, shares with him the bread that he gains by the sweat of his brow, gives alms, and gives them nobly, too. This is the widow's mite, and when the rich man enters the same miserable home to minister abundantly to the same distress, his alms shall have less value in the sight of God than the morsel of bread given by the workman. Those who go much among the poor witness every day this most touching charity, so small in the eyes of men, so great in the sight of God, which they exercise one toward another. They see poor, hard-working women, with little children of their own and scarcely enough to feed them, give a home and a shelter to the poor little orphans whom some dying neighbor entrusted to their care. They see poor workmen open the doors of their humble dwelling to old men paralyzed or blind, who would die of hunger without this assistance, and who thus find care and affection during the last

years of their life. This is the widow's mite; this is the charity Our Lord declares to be the greatest.

Dear children of God who will read, perhaps, these lines, if it has been the will of your Father in heaven to cast your lot among the poor He loves and cares for, act thus unto your brethren, and you shall be rich in God's most holy sight—rich for all eternity.

THE FATHER OF A FAMILY.

THE Gospel forcibly represents God to our minds under the figure of the father of a family. And, indeed, a lesson too often unheeded is hidden beneath this name. It belongs to God, not only because He is the Father, the Principle, the Creator of all things, but because the manner in which we are governed by His Providence is entirely justified by the conduct of a good father of a family here below. Every one knows what constitutes this character: a constant vigilance over his children, an untiring care for their welfare, true affection united to perfect justice, patience with their faults, and, more than all, a generous, earnest love. Every one admires a man who brings up his children upon such a principle as this, and no one would be so unreasonable as to blame him when he sees necessity to mingle severity with tenderness, punishments with rewards.

But if it is thus, how can we ever be so unjust as to murmur against God when He acts with regard to us just as we ourselves act with regard to our children? Why do we do in respect to God, the Father of all men, exactly that which we condemn in our own children, who, less wise than their father and ignorant of his reasons, misjudge their parents, murmur against them, and sometimes even doubt their tenderness? Let us consider a little how an earthly father acts if he is good and wise, and we shall clearly see that God, against whom during the course of our life we often dare to murmur, acts toward us exactly in the manner that we esteem so highly in an earthly father.

First of all, the father gives life to his children, who think little of this fundamental benefit, the basis of their existence and of all their happiness. This is the first resemblance, for we are nothing but children grown, and we forget each day that God is our Creator, that life is a benefit which He has bestowed upon us in pure mercy and goodness, and we never thank Him that He has sent us into the world.

Our love for our children is always greater and more disinterested

than is their love for us A child is generally egotistical, and receives from its parents more affection than it gives them in return. This is the second resemblance, for what would become of us, alas! if our Father in heaven did not love us more than we love Him? We receive everything from Him, and give Him very little in return.

And the father does not only give life to his children, but by his work he provides them with all that they need to nourish and strengthen that life which is dearer to him than his own. He submits to hard work, he labors and toils, and sometimes when weary and tempted to turn aside from the daily task, he remembers his children, and the thought inspires him with renewed energy. The child receives and eats with indifference the bread so hardly earned. God, our Creator, has not only sent us into the world that we may attain that eternal happiness which alone is worthy of His almighty power and love, but He has deigned to come down to earth to labor for this end, by taking our weakness upon Him, by suffering for our sins, and meriting for us this everlasting reward; and, ungrateful that we are, we receive as if it were a little thing the ineffable gifts of the love of Jesus Christ; too often even we reject them, like unto the child who wastes and despises the bread that his father has laboriously gained.

A good father loves all his children with an equal tenderness, and notwithstanding this, or rather because of this, he does not treat them all the same. He varies, according to their characters, his severity or indulgence. He passes over nothing in the child who would only abuse his forbearance, and does not rebuke so severely the child whose character requires a gentler discipline. Moreover, he measures to the appetite and constitution of each the quantity and quality of the food he gives them; in a word, he treats them differently, and at the same time with perfect wisdom, and justice, and love. But instead of recognizing this enlightened affection, the children, jealous of each other, complain, rebel, and accuse their father of showing an unjust preference. Do we see no reflection here of our conduct with regard to God, who gives to each of us what He knows to be necessary and useful? His wisdom is as infinite as His goodness, and even as the heavens are higher than the earth, so is the divine Fatherhood of our great Creator above the common fatherhood of men.

Our children often disobey us, do wrong, and oblige us to punish them. Parental authority is irksome to them, even though it is

their safeguard. When they transgress our commands, and we cause them to suffer for their disobedience, the child, beating against the bars of wholesome discipline, regards firmness as tyranny, and its parents as persecutors. Do we not act in the same way when we murmur against the justice of God, when we resist His holy law, and refuse to understand the punishments due to our sins? Lastly, when the erring child repents and throws itself weeping into its father's arms, does he not pardon it, whatever its fault may be? does not the repentance of a child always efface the guilty past? And God also pardons everything to repentance when He sees it comes from the heart; but when the sinner is incorrigible, God acts like the father of a family, who disinherits and curses his unnatural child, after having exhausted every means of mercy, entreaty, and forbearance; He curses him eternally, disinherits him from celestial happiness, and counts him no longer among His children.

This striking resemblance might be carried still further. If we reflected a little sometimes on that standard of right which God Himself has given us as the guide of our own conduct, we should understand more clearly His dealings with ourselves; we should see that in this, as in all things, God has created us in His own image, and learn humbly to accept this justification of that divine Providence of which our best and highest instincts are only a pale reflection.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

SUCH is the title of one of the most touching parables of Our Lord.

A parable is an allegorical story which embodies for those who hear it some moral lesson. Our Lord Jesus Christ was accustomed by this means to instruct the people who gathered round Him.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is one of the most beautiful in the Gospel, and one which is most fraught with the lessons that we need.

Sinners, won by the mercy and compassion of Jesus Christ, often approached to listen to Him, and the Gospel tells us how the Pharisees murmured against Him, saying: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Jesus, who knew their thoughts, spoke to them this parable:

"A certain man had two sons:

"And the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the

portion of substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance.

"And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country, and there wasted his substance living riotously.

"And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want.

"And he went and cleaved to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his farm to feed swine.

"And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

"And returning to himself, he said: How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger.

"I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee: I am not now worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

"And rising up, he came to his father. And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and running to him, fell upon his neck and kissed him.

"And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son.

"And the father said to his servants: Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

"And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and make merry:

"Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

"Even so there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance."

How hard of heart those Jews and those proud Pharisees must have been to resist such words as these. But we who have hearts in our breasts will respond with gladness to this sweet invitation of our merciful Saviour. For this man, this father, is Himself, by whom we have received eternal life in the waters of holy Baptism. Our divine Father has two distinct classes of children: those who ever remain faithful to Him, and those who abandon Him to follow the bent of their own evil passions. To which of these two classes do we belong?—to the faithful, or to the multitude of prodigals?

Alas! once in our past life there came a day (perhaps while we were still young, like the son in the Gospel), there came, I say, a

most disastrous day, when we left our Father's home. With all the gifts of God, with mind and heart, with senses and imagination, and with all our worldly possessions, we abandoned God our Father. He allowed us to go from Him, for He retains no one forcibly by His side. This liberty, with which He has endowed us, and which is destined in His merciful designs to enable us to merit the glory of Paradise, we may by sinning use against Him, like the prodigal son, who abandoned his father by means of the inheritance he placed in his hands. . . .

And he went into a far country, the poor prodigal! far from his father, into a strange land. Sin does, in truth, lead far from God. The soul dwells no longer in an abode of peace, innocence, and virtue; and what is it that she seeks and finds in this dark region? Impurity instead of holy purity, and in the place of humility, vanity and a restless desire for notoriety; instead of the love of God, the love of evil and the guilty pleasures of sin; in a word, in the place of life, there is death; in the place of all that is good, there are all things evil; in the place of God, there is the Devil, the lord and master of sinful men!

But in this life, shut out from God, the prodigal finds no happiness. He spends all his substance, and poverty and wretchedness come upon him. There is a mighty famine in the land which he inhabits, the famine of the soul, the hunger of the heart; for that heart which is made for God alone can only find repose when it is united to Him by faith, and hope, and love.

And the prodigal does not only suffer from want, but from humiliation and degradation; from the liberty of the children of God he passes into the servitude of the Devil. He becomes the slave of one of the lords of that miserable region, that is to say, of some dominant sin which holds him in its most ignoble yoke; sometimes it is drunkenness, sometimes it is sloth, sometimes it is anger, most often it is the shameful vice we even shrink to name.

And, in the vile slavery of the passions, the child of a rich and noble father passes his days with swine—passes his days, that is, in loathsome sins and degraded companionships.

But now from the very depths of his misery and abjection he lifts his eyes to heaven. He remembers his father, his goodness, his tenderness. . . . His heart is softened; hope springs up in his soul, and with it comes repentance. . . . The guilty man returns to himself, and becomes conscious of his shame. It is enough! he cries. I can no longer lead such a life. How many, less favored by God than I,

are in His service, happy and contented with their lot, while I am wasting the precious moments of my life! I will arise and go unto my Father. I will retrace my steps; I will become once more pure and upright, virtuous and devout. I will not shrink from the humiliation of a sincere acknowledgment of my sins, I will confess them humbly as I did in better, happier days.

This good resolution once made, the repentant prodigal does not delay the fulfilment of it, however difficult, until some distant and uncertain time. He rises immediately and leaves the swine,—that is to say, he shakes off the shameful habits of his vicious career, abandons and execrates the service of the cruel master who held him in bondage, and reaches his father's home. . . . There he finds no merciless judge, but a true father, in the priest who welcomes and receives him.

"I have sinned," says the repentant sinner, "I confess to God, and to His saints, and to you, Father! I am not worthy of pardon, but my hope is in the goodness of God." How quickly come the words of forgiveness: "I absolve thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Go in peace, my child, and sin no more! behold the white robe of thy innocence, the peace and glory thou hadst lost. Thou art become once more the child of God, the heir to an eternal crown. . . . Come, therefore, O purified soul, approach the sacred banquet prepared by our heavenly Father for His faithful children, in which He gives them, for the food and nourishment of their souls, Jesus, His own divine Son, in the Sacrament of His love!"

And the poor sinner, taught by bitter experience, and treasuring his new-found happiness the more since he has lost it for so long, vainly strives to give expression to his gratitude.

Is this your history, reader? If you have, like the prodigal, wandered from the happy home of your childhood, hasten, I entreat you, even as he hastened, to return. Your Father is waiting for you; He is weeping for the child whom He has lost. . . . God grant that soon there may be joy in heaven over your return.

THE FIELD AND THE GOOD SEED.

A MAN had a field, and, when the time was come, he went out to sow his seed. You have seen laborers sowing seed in the country, and you know how they scatter it along the furrows. The master of this field, sowing the seed in this manner, let some of it fall on the

road by the side of his field, and the little birds carried it away quickly, for the road was hard and beaten, so that it could not sink into the earth.

And some fell upon a stony place; and as there was not enough soil or moisture, the seed, as soon as it sprung up, withered and died.

And some was cast into a corner of the field where briars and weeds covered the ground; the wheat sprung up and even attained a certain growth, but little by little the parasitical plants surrounded it, the stem withered, and it was soon completely choked.

And lastly, the remainder of the seed—and this, thanks be to God! was by far the greater part—fell into the fertile ground; and, when the time of the harvest was come, the master of the field saw with joy that it was covered with golden corn, and that the ripened ears contained some thirty grains, some sixty, and some even a hundred. Then he sent his reapers with their sickles, and filled his spacious granaries with the produce of the harvest.

Do you know who is this Man, this Sower who ploughs His field in the sweat of His brow, who sows it Himself, and cultivates it with such care? Do you know what is this field, this ploughed and cultivated land, the possession of its owner? And, lastly, do you know what is this seed cast into the field when the time for the sowing is come?

This Man is Jesus Christ Our Lord, perfect God and perfect Man, the Sovereign Master of the world, who came forth from the bosom of the Father by the adorable mystery of the Incarnation. This field which belongs to Him is the whole world, and in particular the human race, the great family of His reasonable creatures. The seed is Truth, it is the Christian Faith which He comes to plant as a fruitful germ in the depths of our hearts, prepared to receive the gift of God, and, in a manner, ploughed by the workings of divine grace.

Our Lord and Saviour gives us all the seed of life, He casts the good grain all around; but all do not receive it alike, all do not correspond to the designs of His infinite goodness. Some, wholly given up to sin, have hardened their hearts; they hear the truth, but they do not receive it with love and reverence, and the devil has no trouble to render it wholly useless. These are represented by the beaten road where the seed cannot enter, and where the birds carry it away when it is not crushed beneath the feet.

Others, represented by the rocky ground, have certain good desires, but their hearts, similar to ground of which the soil is dry and

only sprinkled here and there, are not capable of deep impressions. The truth strikes them perhaps for an instant, but it finds neither means of growth nor sufficient preparation; and the germ of life quickly decays and dies.

Others, still better disposed, receive the Word of God into hearts that are well prepared. It germinates and acquires, year after year, a growth which is full of promise; but, alas! the passions gain strength, and, like to the briars and thorns, gradually overpower the good inclinations implanted by God. To triumph over evil, to rise above the thorns, courage is needed, diligence in prayer, an earnest spirit, capable of sacrifice: instead of this, men give themselves to pleasure; they begin by a reckless and misguided use of that which is permitted, and end by grasping madly at that which is forbidden; they lose the spirit of faith, and soon the briars cover all the ground, the dew of heaven can no longer penetrate to the stem of the plant, neither can the vivifying rays of the sun, and therefore the ears can not form, and the stem itself dies for want of moisture.

Lastly, and this, I trust, applies to you, my reader, there is the good ground, where there are neither weeds nor stones, and which receives into its furrows the grains of wheat which the divine Sower plants there. Developing beneath the influence of God's grace, the generous grain reaches its full maturity; the soul corresponding to the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ puts in practice His precepts and His counsels, and marks out by works of Christian holiness every step of life. Among these faithful Christians some, represented by the ears of thirty grains, fulfil their duties faithfully, yet without aiming at perfection; and others, typified by the ears of sixty and a hundred grains, give themselves to God with a more perfect generosity, advance incessantly in the love of Jesus Christ, and thus constitute the best and noblest portion of His holy Church.

The time of the harvest is for each of us the instant in which we enter upon eternity, and the rich granaries of the Lord of the harvest are the many mansions of our heavenly home where we confidently hope to be admitted, not by our own merits, but by the great mercy of God, and through the infinite merits of Jesus Our Lord. The reapers are the holy angels who will present our souls to God when they shall leave this world, and who will be with us in the dwelling of our heavenly Father. O happy harvest! sweet and blessed hope! may we all strive to lead the life which shall bring to us this glorious fruition!

THE PARABLE OF THE SAMARITAN.

ONE day when Our Lord was teaching the people who surrounded Him, He spoke to them this parable, related by St. Luke in the tenth chapter of his gospel:

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who also stripped him, and, having wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead. And it chanced that a certain priest went down the same way; and seeing him, passed by. In like manner also a Levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan, being on his journey, came near him; and seeing him, was moved with compassion: And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two pence, and gave to the host, and said: Take care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I at my return will repay thee."

Then Jesus asked: "Which of these three men in thy opinion was neighbor to him that fell among robbers?" "He that showed mercy to him," replied the Jew whom Our Lord addressed. And Jesus answered: "Go, and do thou in like manner."

This touching parable teaches us, in the first place, that charity must be active, generous, and devoted. This good Samaritan listens only to the promptings of his heart; he does not calculate; he gives not only his money, but his time, his own personal exertion, and his sympathy; he devotes himself wholly to the cause he has at heart.

It gives us also an illustration of the old proverb, "'Tis not the coat that makes the monk," and we see that men who are specially called by their holy ministry to exercise charity to their neighbor should not allow themselves to be surpassed by others in those labors of love for which they are peculiarly fitted. The priest is lifted by his sacerdotal consecration above the level of other men, and his virtues, more especially the virtues of mercy and kindness, should be proportioned to the excellence of his sacred vocation. Thank God, our Christian priests little resemble that Jewish priest and that hard-hearted Levite, for upon them rests principally, if not entirely, the sweet and heavenly task of comforting the miserable, of consoling the sorrowful, of receiving the unfortunate. The priest alone has received from Jesus as a special trust the divine prescription, as it

were, for the balm of the Samaritan: he applies it to the wounds of poor humanity, whose sufferings he calms, and to whom he restores and preserves life. The faithful who follow his example, and practise for the love of God the great lesson of charity which their pastors are incessantly teaching, imitate also in their turn the Samaritan of the Gospel.

This parable is typical, moreover, of a greater mystery which it would take too long to develop fully here. It shows us Christianity as contrasted with Pharisaism and the ancient law, and teaches us how infinitely more sweet and powerful is the grace of the Gospel than the austerity of the Jewish observance. The Samaritan, a stranger to this law, is the new world, the pagan world, which, regenerated by the Apostles and the Church, was soon to become Christian, and receive with love One whom they found wounded, bleeding, unknown, despised by the Jewish priesthood and by God's ancient people. For He whom all men pass upon the way is no other than the Christ, the Saviour, the Son of God, who, in His infinite love, has made Himself, like us, a traveller on the earth, who has taken a body and a soul like unto ours in the womb of the Immaculate Virgin Mary; who has taken upon Himself the expiation of our sins, and for this cause has abandoned Himself to the strokes of divine justice, to the sacrilegious fury of devils, and of the impious Jews. Jesus recognizes for His brethren and faithful disciples only those who come to Him, only those who bring consolation to His Sacred Heart by the fidelity of their love. And since He is now ascended to the right hand of His Father in the invisible glory of the heavens, it is in the persons of our brethren, and particularly of the poor, that we must henceforth prove our charity to Him. "As long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it to Me." Let us therefore love each other with a sincere, effective, and compassionate love; let us not limit our charity to material alms, but let us rather give to our alms their true value by our personal sympathy, our willing assistance, and our kindly, compassionate words. Blessed is he who shows mercy in such a spirit as this; Our Lord will render to him a hundredfold when He shall come again at the last great day.

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN.

THERE are still to be seen at Jerusalem the ruins of a splendid house, which tradition relates to have been that of the rich man of the Gospel. For some believe that this celebrated parable was not a simple allegory made use of by Our Lord for the teaching of a truth, but the real history of men who had existed.

However that may be, let us carefully consider the divine words, and derive from them instruction.

"There was a certain rich man," said Our Lord one day to His disciples and the Jews gathered round Him. It is indeed no sin to be rich, and often it is a great grace from God. What good may not be done with riches? And how many of the poor and unfortunate have reason to thank Heaven for having bestowed fortunes upon those who have charitable hearts and are ever ready to assist them. At the same time we must reflect upon these words of Our Saviour, since He never uttered useless words. Therefore: "There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen." Here we have a most serious fact, and one which indicates the first danger of riches. It is no evil to be rich, but it is a danger to those who have not the true Christian spirit and a compassionate heart; and it is easier for a rich man to become proud and egotistical than it is for a poor man.

"The rich man feasted sumptuously every day." This is the second danger of riches when not counterbalanced by piety: sensuality, voluptuousness, and love of pleasure. Indeed, experience proves that it is infinitely less difficult to resign one's self to privations than to restrain one's self in the midst of enjoyment.

Such was the life of this rich man, entirely filled with feasting, amusement, and all those pleasures which the world regards as perfectly innocent. According to human judgment, he was a happy man. It also appears that he led what is socially considered a blameless life, for we do not read in the Gospel of any wrong that he had done.

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him." The rich man did not refuse him; he simply forgot the beggar. . . .

And dogs, more pitiful than the man of pleasure, seemed to furnish the lesson he needed, for, gathering round poor Lazarus, they

licked his wounds. And thus these two lives passed: for one, worldly pleasures and the indifference born of prosperity and ease; for the other, suffering, poverty, patience, and resignation.

"And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."

That is to say, to paradise, to the eternal dwelling of the just, to the true home of the children of God. He had apparently done nothing extraordinary to merit so great a reward, but the judgments of God are happily very different to the judgments of men, and poor Lazarus had done much by suffering with patience, and by humbling himself meekly beneath the hand of God.

"And the rich man also died: and," added the Christ, "he was buried in hell!" What unexpected words! And why so terrible a punishment? Is it, then, a crime to be rich? . . . No, but a danger, and one which this man had failed to escape. Instead of being the father of the poor, and going about doing good after the example of our divine Lord, he had been wholly occupied with himself, he had lived a life of selfish ease, and had floated down the current which is ever rushing onward to the fathomless ocean of unutterable despair.

"And lifting up his eyes when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom: and he cried and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

"And Abraham said to him: Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

And here the poor who love God may find consolation, and the rich who do not love Him may see just cause for fear. We do not simply say the poor and the rich, but the poor who love God, and the rich who love Him not. It is a matter of indifference to God whether we are poor or rich, but our heavenly Father is by no means indifferent to the disposition of heart with which we support the trial of poverty, or the still greater trial, perhaps, of riches. It is better to be poor and holy than rich and holy, because poverty renders us more like to Jesus Christ, the model of all the elect; but it is infinitely better to be rich and holy than poor and sinful; and Our Lord Himself declares in the Gospel that it is not riches, but the abuse of riches, which excludes us from the kingdom of God.

Dear children of God who are poor, even as our blessed Lord was poor, seek consolation in the certain hope of happiness to come!

Suffer with patience and with Christian fortitude the sorrows of this present life, and, like unto the poor and holy Lazarus, do not murmur, but bear your cross with love!

ST. PETER DELIVERED BY THE ANGEL.

St. Peter, being elected by Jesus Christ to be the chief of the Apostles and the head of the Church, commenced to preach the divine law upon Mount Sion on the day of Pentecost. The Apostles and disciples, priests and deacons, preached with him under his direction. The Jews of Jerusalem and of the cities and villages round, having been witnesses of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and of the wonderful miracles of those whom He had sent, were converted in great numbers, and asked to be baptized, so that a considerable society of Christians was very speedily formed. Herod, the enemy of Christ, was alarmed at the rapid propagation of the Christian faith, and, desiring to please the unbelieving Jews, he set on foot a violent persecution. St. James the Greater, brother of St. John, had the happiness to suffer martyrdom upon this occasion; and thus the Church of Jerusalem was the first to gain, by the martyrdom of her first bishop, the crown of the glorious victory which is sealed by the blood of the saints.

But Herod, in order to disperse the little flock, desired to reach higher still, and struck the Sovereign Pastor. He seized St. Peter, and put him in prison, intending after the Easter festival to have him put to death in the presence of all the people. Therefore four bands of soldiers guarded the holy captive day and night. And the whole Church prayed without ceasing for her Pontiff and her Father.

On the very night preceding the day fixed for his suffering, Peter slept in his prison, bound by a double chain and with a soldier at each side. And other guards were watching before the prison door.

And suddenly an Angel of God stood by him, under a human form, but surrounded by heavenly radiance, and the prison was filled with light. The Angel touched Peter and awoke him. "Arise quickly," he said, and immediately the chains fell from his hands. And the Angel said to him, "Gird thyself, and put on thy sandals, and follow me." Peter obeyed, and going out from the prison he followed the Angel, hardly conscious whether it were all a dream or a reality.

They passed the first and second body of guards, and came to the iron gate which leads to the city, which of itself opened to them.

And soon after the Angel disappeared. And coming to himself, Peter cried: "Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent His Angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

And he turned his steps toward the house of Mary, the mother of St. Mark, who was the faithful companion of St. Peter in all his evangelical labors, and who wrote at Rome, under his dictation, one of the four gospels, and was afterward sent by him to Egypt, where he died, the first bishop and martyr of Alexandria. Having reached this house, where many Christians were assembled in prayer, the holy Apostle knocked at the door; a young servant named Rhoda came to listen, and, recognizing the voice of Peter, she ran back again to the disciples and told them that Peter was at the gate. She had forgotten in her joy to open it. They answered her: "Thou art mad. But she affirmed that it was so. Then said they: It is his angel."

And in the mean time Peter continued to knock. Then they went all together to open the gate, and when they saw him they were overcome with astonishment. And Peter told them all that had passed, and then he left Jerusalem before the dawn of day. In the morning the surprise and disturbance of the soldiers were extreme when they found their prisoner was no longer there. Herod, having sent to seek him, came himself in great anger; he examined the soldiers and commanded that they should be put to death. He died himself soon after, being struck by the Angel of the Lord for his crimes, "and being eaten up by worms, he gave up the ghost."

And the Church increased and multiplied day after day, continuing fervent and unanimous in prayer, in daily communion, in the practice of all good works, and in the most perfect obedience to St. Peter and all the Apostles of Our Lord.

MIRACULOUS CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

Herod Agrippa, the king of the Jews, and the high-priest also, watched carefully for every opportunity of persecuting the apostles, and those who believed on their word. They found only too faithful a servant and ally in a young man of Tarsus named Saul, the same who had taken charge of the garments of those who stoned the deacon Stephen. And to him they gave full liberty to persecute the disciples of Jesus Christ. We learn from himself that at Jerusalem he went from house to house of all those who were suspected of Chris

tianity, and dragging away those men and women who confessed the faith, committed them to prison, and framed decrees against them, which he hastened to put into execution.

One day when he was wholly occupied with his projects against the disciples of Jesus Christ crucified, he learned that at Damascus a large number of Israelites had forsaken the law of Moses to follow Jesus Christ. He went immediately to the high-priest, and asked him for letters to Damascus and to the synagogues, so that he should possess liberty to seize the Christians and bring them bound to Jerusalem. His proposition was accepted, and he set out for Damascus accompanied by others in an official position who were under his orders. As a tiger thirsting for blood rushes upon a sheepfold, even so did Saul now press forward on his errand, breathing only carnage—when suddenly he was stopped in the midst of his journey.

"At midday," he said himself, when relating his conversion to King Agrippa, "suddenly from heaven there shone round about me a great light: and falling on the ground, I heard a voice saying to me: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And I answered: Who art Thou, Lord? And He said to me: I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And I said: What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me: Arise and go to Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things that thou must do. And whereas I did not see for the brightness of that light, being led by the hand by my companions, I came to Damascus. . . .

"Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias, and the Lord said to him in a vision: Ananias. And he said: Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said to him: Arise, and go into the street that is called Strait, and seek in the house of Judas one named Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth. But Ananias answered: Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints in Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that invoke Thy name. And the Lord said to him: Go thy way: for this man is to Me a vessel of election, to carry My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and laying his hands upon him, he said: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus hath sent me, He that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight: and rising up, he was baptized."

The conversion of St. Paul, of which the historical accuracy is incontestable, proves the divinity of Christianity by two of the most striking miracles that it is possible to conceive. We see first the outward miracle, as we have just related it, and secondly the inward miracle. For St. Paul went forth from Jerusalem breathing fury against the Christians, and desiring nothing but their death; and suddenly we behold that his every thought has changed, and that his very nature appears altered. He becomes a Christian, and one of the most intrepid Apostles of Jesus Christ. Such a change constitutes a miracle no less wonderful than the first; for, if it is contrary to the moral constitution of man to pass suddenly and without any motive from an implacable hatred to an ardent love, it is still more extraordinary when the most powerful motives still exist to inflame the fury of a persecutor. And without doubt most powerful were the motives which all combined to deter Saul from such a change. First: The love of his nation and his religion, for he loved the Jews, and was deeply attached to Judaism. Second: His own personal interest; his worldly prospects, which were brilliant in the extreme. All depended upon his remaining a Jew. He had gained the protection of the princes and magistrates of his nation by his zeal against the Christians; while by his conversion to Christianity he had nothing to hope from the Apostles, who were detested, despised, poor, ignorant, timid, whose Master had died ignominiously, and whose whole undertaking seemed now on the point of being entirely overthrown by the princes and magistrates leagued against them. Far from having anything to hope for, he knew well that he was devoting himself to ignominy, to torments, to persecutions, even to death, since that was the lot of the early Christians; he would have even more to fear than others, because the Jews would regard him as a traitor, who had betrayed them by asking for letters which would enable him to persecute the Christians of Damascus. Therefore it is clearly evident, from all these considerations, that the fact of the conversion of St. Paul, notwithstanding all the powerful motives which he had to persevere in Judaism, includes two striking miracles which prove the divinity of Christianity.

Thus Jesus Christ, by His almighty power, made of St. Paul that vessel of election whose ardent zeal to proclaim the Christian faith soon spread throughout the nations of the earth. He is justly called the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

SIXTH PART

PIERRE THE APPRENTICE.

ONE Sunday in the February of 1858, a poor boy about fifteen or sixteen years old came to my house at Paris and asked to see me. He was exceedingly pale and delicate looking, and was very meanly dressed. His large blue eyes were full of candor, and his gentle, subdued manner pleaded in his favor. He told me that his name was Pierre Sazy, and that he was an orphan apprenticed to a gilder, and had come to me to seek refuge and protection. I made him sit down, and he told me his story.

His father had been a workman, and a very indifferent Catholic, and his mother, who had died when he was a little child, was a Protestant. Owing to the care of Sister G——, one of the good sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, who knew his family, the two children, Pierre and Auguste, had been brought up in the Catholic religion, and the poor mother, before she died, had embraced the true faith. When Pierre was thirteen, and Auguste six or seven years old, they lost their father. They were received by one of their aunts, who left no means untried to induce the children to become Protestants.

Pierre resolutely resisted, and although he was deprived of all communication with any Catholic priests, and forbidden to go to Mass on Sunday, to confession, or communion, the poor little fellow preserved intact the treasure of his holy faith. It was in vain that his aunt took him to three Protestant pastors in succession; the child held firm, and remained faithful.

At last his aunt grew angry, and on the 4th of January she told him, as a kind of New Year's greeting perhaps, that he must either become a Protestant or leave her house at once. The poor apprentice had no other home. His employers gave him board and lodging all the week, but on Sundays they went into the country, the house was shut up, and the apprentice was obliged to go where he could. Pierre, being now forced to renounce his faith or to remain without food or shelter for twenty-four hours, did not hesitate an instant.

For six Sundays in succession he went without anything to eat, and passed the nights in wandering through the deserted streets of the capital.

On one of these Sundays, at ten o'clock in the evening, overcome by hunger, cold, and weariness, he went and knocked at his aunt's door. When she recognized his voice she asked him, without opening it, if he still persisted in remaining a Catholic. Upon his reply in the affirmative, and in spite of his supplications, she angrily dismissed him. It was snowing fast, and the poor boy passed the whole night out of doors. But so severe a trial could not last much longer; the child's health gave way, and a wearing, constant cough began to exhaust his strength.

On the following Sunday he remembered Sister G——, who had been the kind protectress of his family. He made inquiries as to where she was living, and after much trouble found her at last, and when he saw her he threw himself into her arms, exclaiming, "Sister, have pity on me, I give myself up to you!" The good sister, having given him plenty to eat, and congratulated him on his constancy, sent him to me with her recommendation, and thus Pierre presented himself before me, and, relying upon the message that he brought for the warmth of his reception, entreated me to be a father to him. God knows how willingly I consented. But as the soul is of far higher value than the body, I commenced by recalling to this dear child the principal points of the faith for which he had suffered so much; then I heard his confession, and gave him those supreme consolations which have their only source in the Adorable Heart of Jesus. When he rose from his knees, my poor little Pierre, quite overcome and his eyes full of tears, clung to me, embracing me with affection: "What a happy thing it was for me," he exclaimed, "that they turned me out of doors!"

And so every Sunday after that he came back to me; every one received him as if he had a right to be there; he had his own little room and his supper ready for him; and on Monday morning he went off contentedly to his work.

One Sunday in the early days of April, Pierre appeared to us to be paler than usual, tired, and suffering. A low fever came on, and he could not go back to his master. A few days after, one of my friends, a clever physician, having come to see me, I asked him to examine my poor apprentice, who appeared quite exhausted. "The boy is dying," said the doctor, after having seen him; "he is in consumption, and a part of his right lung is already gone."

What was to be done? I could not keep the child with me, as I could not make proper arrangements for having him nursed well. It was a difficult thing to send him to the hospital, as there they are unwilling to admit patients who appear to be only suffering from weakness.

I immediately applied to the good Brothers of St. John of God, and the charity of these admirable religious was even beyond my hopes. They immediately received my little sick boy for the love of God, gave him a clean, comfortable room, and from that day (April 15th) surrounded him with such constant care, such affectionate and thoughtful attention, that poor Pierre, quite amazed at such devotion, could not speak of it without tears.

He was nursed and cared for night and day. "I am treated like a little prince," he said to me. "These good brothers give me everything I want; they are true saints, and I thank God for sending me to them."

And the good brothers loved Pierre as if he were their child. They told me when I came to see him how the poor little fellow, whose sufferings were extreme, constantly edified them by his patience and his fervor. He received communion at first every week. "I am making up for lost time," he said. Then, when I saw this pure and innocent soul truly hungering for the divine Eucharist, I allowed him to communicate twice, and then three times a week, and at last just "when his heart told him." And the grace of God so completely filled the heart of the child He had called to be His, that, without any need of confession, he went to communion every day. "He receives Our Lord like a little angel," said the brother who had the care of the infirmary. Pierre found in communion all his happiness and all his strength. "When I have received communion I suffer less," he said, "and I cannot be impatient any more. If I ever get well I will consecrate myself to God, and will be a priest, or a brother of St. John of God."

In the mean time the disease seemed to be making no progress, and the time had passed which the physicians had named as the probable extent of his life. Pierre, in spite of his sufferings, was always cheerful and sweet-tempered.

One day a barber of the neighborhood, who was regularly employed at the house, and who happened to be upon this occasion decidedly more merry than he ought to have been, entered Pierre's room and proposed to shave him. Pierre gravely seated himself. Then the barber perceived that the young face had not even the

shadow of a beard. "But you have no beard!" he exclaimed, regarding the sick boy with stupid astonishment. "I know that very well," replied Pierre. "Then what are you waiting for?" "I am waiting till it grows," said the good little fellow, smiling.

This unfailing sweetness of temper, united as it was to such true piety, gained all hearts, and great was the number of charitable friends who came to visit him. The good sister went to see him often, and she would tell me a thousand little details which showed his grateful, affectionate nature. "You cannot imagine," she would say, "how thankful he is for all that is done for him. Whenever he hears you spoken of, his eyes fill with tears, and your visits comfort him more than all the remedies."

But the moment was fast approaching when Pierre should enter into the rest and the peace of Him whom he loved with such pure and childlike tenderness. On the 17th of July he asked if the Holy Communion might be brought to him very early the next morning. The night was full of suffering, his poor little body was wasted to a skeleton, and every movement of the bed-clothes gave him pain.

At a quarter-past four, a brother came to prepare the altar for the Holy Eucharist, which the chaplain was soon going to bring. He knelt down by the child's bed. "My dear brother," said Pierre, "shall we pray together?" "Yes, my dear child; what prayer shall we say?" Pierre named the Litany for a happy death, a beautiful prayer filled with consoling thoughts, which he knew almost by heart from having repeated it so often. Scarcely was the Litany finished than he called to the brother with a sharp cry, and he, being alarmed at the sudden change which had passed over the child's face, went in haste to seek the brother who was accustomed to nurse him. This good religious hastened immediately to his side, held the cross to the lips of the dying child, had just time to suggest to him some acts of love, of contrition, of confidence in Jesus and Mary, and at about half-past five in the morning he received poor Pierre's last sigh. Only a little later the humble, pious child was to have received communion upon earth; Jesus had called him to a more excellent communion still: to one of which the fruit can never be lost—to the communion of a blissful eternity.

Lying there upon his death-bed, my little Pierre looked like a sleeping angel. A new, strange beauty and a heavenly sweetness rested on the calm young face. They buried him with the scapular and medal of the Blessed Virgin, in whose protection he had had perfect confidence, and with a large crucifix which I had given him,

and which he had worn round his neck night and day, and had kissed frequently, saying: "My Jesus, I love Thee!"

The next day, the 19th of July, many of those who had known and loved him accompanied his coffin first to the church, then to the cemetery of Montparnasse; very poor and simple was that coffin in the eyes of men, but very rich, I doubt not, in the sight of God and of His angels. . . . Upon his grave I had a white cross placed, with this simple inscription: "Here rests, in the peace of God, and in the eternal love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Pierre Sazy, His faithful servant, who lived sixteen years, and died on the eighteenth of July, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight, in the confession of the Catholic faith."

CONVERSION AND DEATH OF A YOUNG PROTESTANT.

A POOR sempstress of Paris, Mademoiselle P——, who was wholly devoted to God and to good works, heard one day in the month of November, 1850, that a young Swiss artist, a Protestant, dying of consumption, had been reduced by poverty to enter the hospital to be nursed through his last illness.

The thought of the lonely, friendless condition of this young man, who had lost both his fortune and his health, and, still more, a desire to save his soul, inspired Mademoiselle P—— with the idea—a singular one perhaps, but, at all events, most Christian—of going to the hospital to see M. Gabriel Œdmann, and of trying to impart to him, if possible, the only true consolation.

According to the Christian rule, Mademoiselle P—— commenced by prayer. She cast herself at the feet of the Mother of God, and promised her to spend for the poor sick man all that she could gain up to the time of his conversion; she asked many to join her in prayers for this intention, she had a Mass said for the success of her good work, and then, under the protection of Mary, she entered the hospital of Beaujon.

Gabriel Œdmann was thirty years old. He was dying of consumption. Death was already written upon his wasted face.

He received Mademoiselle P—— at first with astonishment, then with pleasure. To those who are suffering, any kindly, friendly face does good. His visitor spoke to him of his illness, of his circumstances, of anything that would be likely to interest him. She asked if she might come and see him again. "Yes, indeed, gladly," ex

claimed the poor sick man, quite touched; "no visit has ever given me so much pleasure." And when Mademoiselle P—— left him, his eyes followed her with gratitude.

The following Sunday she came again. Gabriel Œdmann could not understand such kindness. "But you do not know me," he repeated, "why should you take any trouble about me?" And the pious sempstress tried to explain to him the difference there is between the love with which Christians love one another and the so-called friendships which exist between men and women of the world.

Everything went smoothly so long as she confined herself to general topics, but when she began to speak to him of the Blessed Virgin, when she asked him if he would not be glad to think that others were asking her prayers for him, he grew angry, and replied with animation "that he was not a Catholic, and should be sorry to put confidence in a woman who could do nothing for him; in God perhaps; but in the Virgin, never!" The poor girl replied, quite simply, that Catholics love the Blessed Virgin because she is the Mother of God; that they call upon her in their troubles because the Saviour, when dying, gave her to His disciples to be their Mother and Protectress; and that all are sure of her assistance who invoke her with faith and confidence. "And do you think that she could cure me?" asked Œdmann. "See what a long time every one has tried in vain!" "Indeed she could cure you," replied the pious sempstress; "that is to say, she can obtain for you the cure of your body, and, what is better still, patience and resignation. But for this it is necessary to pray to her, and to believe that she is truly the Mother of God."

Gabriel Œdmann, unusually moved, remained silent for an instant. "And you, do you believe this?" he asked suddenly. "I do most firmly believe it." "Then I will believe it, too. Pray for me, and ask your friends to pray for me, as you said; though I cannot imagine why they should pray for a stranger." Then Mademoiselle P—— told him that the young girls who belonged to the associations of the Blessed Virgin met every Sunday and prayed together, and how they prayed especially for the afflicted, for the sick, and for sinners. Gabriel seemed surprised and touched at all he heard. "But you also, for your part," added Mademoiselle P——, "must pray yourself to Mary. Stay, here is a beautiful prayer composed in her honor by a saint." (It was the Memorare.) "Will you promise me to read it?" "Yes," replied Gabriel. "And here is a little medal with her image; let me tie it round your neck."

The sick man consented, and from that moment a great change came over him. "If she can cure me," he said, "I will pray to her every day." And there were tears in his eyes as he spoke. "And now," he added, "you are no longer a stranger to me, let me think of you as my sister."

Before leaving him, Mademoiselle P—— asked him if he would receive a visit from a priest whom she knew, and to whose prayers she had recommended him. "Willingly," he said, "provided that he does not talk to me about religion."

Happy at her success, full of faith and of confidence in the Blessed Virgin, Mademoiselle P—— came to me with this good news. I went at once to the dying man. We soon made acquaintance with each other; my first visit was short, but we parted friends. I did not speak of religion, and Gabriel requested me to come again. In a very little time I did so, and I read my welcome in the suffering, dying face of the poor artist. I sat down by his pillow; he held my hand in his and regarded me with affection. I spoke to him of God, and of the consolations He gives to those who love Him. I soon perceived that poor Gabriel had not even the semblance of a creed. He scarcely believed in God or in His divine Providence, not at all in the Blessed Trinity, nor in Jesus Christ, nor in Christianity. I briefly explained to him all that the Catholic Church teaches concerning these great truths, and he seemed surprised at finding it all so clear, so reasonable, so worthy of God and man. As I spoke to him, his eyes were fixed upon me, and an undefinable expression animated his pale, sunken features. I felt I could see the action of God's grace rushing in upon this soul; life was being breathed into it, the light of Jesus Christ was enlightening it, the Holy Spirit was dilating and softening his heart; and presently I began speaking to him of the sweet Virgin Mother, and of the excess of the mercy of our heavenly Father, who, not content with having given us His Son for Our Saviour, went further still, and was willing in His great compassion to envelop the divine Sun of Justice and of Holiness in a soft, luminous cloud, lest His bright eyes and piercing rays, which even the mystery of the Incarnation could not dim, should overpower and dazzle our feeble human sight.

"Everything you say is new to me," said poor Gabriel; "but I feel irresistibly convinced of its truth. I have never had such teaching, and light seems breaking in upon my mind with every word you utter. Such faith I feel must come from God; it is a revelation; and I believe that in mercy He has sent you to me, who had no faith,

that I should not die in darkness. For this I thank Him, and now I will hear you, father, to the end, and you shall be to me as a messenger from heaven."

And next I spoke to him of the Sovereign Pontiff of the Catholic Church, and explained to him how the Pope is the successor of St. Peter, the Supreme Head of the disciples of Jesus Christ; and that we are all bound to listen to him and obey him, because it is by Jesus Christ that he is sent; and I repeated the grand words of the Gospel: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

"Are those the exact words of the Gospel," he questioned, "and truly spoken by Jesus Christ?" I found the passage and gave it to him to read, and I could see by the expression of his face as he read that he was perfectly content, and that every shadow of doubt was passing swiftly away. I should have wished to give him time to think over all I had said, and to realize the happiness which arises from a conviction of the truth; but the hours were precious, the sister had warned me that he might not live through the night, therefore I decided.

"My child," I said to the dying man, "you are a Catholic at heart already, why should you not be so altogether? You should wait no longer, but should at once enter into the true Church of Jesus Christ." Gabriel Œdmann did not answer, but steadfastly regarded me. "Will you become a Catholic?" I repeated. A violent conflict seemed to be going on in his mind. "Yes," he said at last in a whisper; "but what will my mother say if she should hear?" "What could she say? When we recognize an error, is it not loyal, is it not necessary, to renounce it at once and to embrace the truth? Do you firmly believe that there is one God in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost?" "Yes, I believe it." "Do you believe that the Son was made man to save you; that He died for you upon the cross; and that He has prepared for you a blessed eternity?" "Yes, I believe it, I believe it with my whole heart." "Do you believe that there is only one Church which is divinely appointed to teach the Christian faith, and will you become her child?" "I will." Then I took some holy water which I had brought in case I should need it, and baptized him conditionally under the name of Gabriel André Marie.

It was the 30th of November, the feast of St. Andrew, Apostle, and his own feast. We were both struck by this coincidence.

"What happiness!" he repeated. "What happiness! it is truly the day of my feast!" And as he spoke his face grew radiant. I then received his confession, and gave him absolution conditionally also, as is done in such cases. And when I had ended he embraced me with inexpressible tenderness and emotion. "Father, father," he murmured, "I believe all! How good God is! He has forgiven me everything. He loves me, and I love Him. I have never been so happy in my life!" Then, lifting his eyes to heaven, he exclaimed: "I see now why all this trouble came upon me, and why I was obliged to take refuge in this hospital. It was because I refused to believe in Jesus Christ. God struck me in order to heal me. But now I am a Christian. All is ended." He asked me to allow him to make his first communion, but I put it off until the next day, for fear of tiring him too much; and, full of gratitude to the Mother of mercy, I left this new-born son of my heart, whom I was never, alas! to see again in this world.

Mademoiselle P—— went to him the next day. I was prevented going. As soon as he perceived her he held out his hands, and exclaimed, with tears in his eyes, "Thank God, I am a Catholic!" The poor girl was so much moved at seeing him thus that she burst into tears. The dying man spoke to her of God with an emotion and a depth of feeling that were quite wonderful in one who had been so cold and indifferent. "I was baptized," he said; "I made my confession, and was absolved from my sins on the day of my feast. It was the feast of St. Andrew. My dear little sister, I am a Catholic, I am the happiest man in the world."

It was arranged that the next day I should see him, and that he should make his first communion.

"There is no time for delay," he added; "for I am going to die. I recommend myself to your charity. I should like to rest, when I am dead, in the midst of my brethren in consecrated Catholic ground." Mademoiselle P—— promised him that this should be as he desired. She left him full of faith, of gratitude, of love to Jesus Christ, of devotion toward the Mother of God.

When she returned the next morning at nine o'clock he was dead. I met her coming back. We thanked God together for the salvation of this soul, worked by our united efforts; and on the following day I offered for the expiation of his sins the sacrifice of Propitiation, of which I placed the fruits in the hands of Mary.

Mademoiselle P—— brought her work to its final completion. By her own wish she paid the expenses of the burial of Gabriel Œdmann

out of her modest earnings, and accompanied him herself to his last resting-place.

THE REGENERATION OF A PARISH.

SEVEN or eight years ago the venerable bishop of a diocese, sadly remarkable for religious indifference and neglect of the sacraments, summoned a young priest—pious, humble, and devout—in order to confide to him a strange mission. "I have," he said, "at the extremity of my diocese a population of more than eight hundred souls, who have no religion and no church within their reach. It is necessary that these should be saved, evangelized; and I have thought of you. A parish must be created there, and I have appointed you the *curé;* only I can give you no money, and there is neither church, nor presbytery, nor school, nor stipend. Have you the courage to undertake this mission?" The good priest knelt down: "Command me, Monseigneur," he said. "I am the child of obedience—*In verbo tuo laxabo rete.*" And he departed with the blessing of his bishop, or rather of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who, hidden in His bishops as in a kind of sacrament, continues through them His divine ministry of the Good Shepherd, even until the end of the world. I have the honor and the happiness to know this priest, and it is from himself that I have received some of the details I am about to relate.

He commenced by consecrating the whole of his little patrimony to enable him to commence building a church. This patrimony amounted to little more than three hundred pounds. His father and mother gave it up to him with the understanding that, as they were both very old, he should make a home for them and provide for their necessities. Another old lady, a widow, who had previously helped in paying the expenses of the ecclesiastical education of the new *curé*, did the same as his father and mother, and took shelter with them beneath the more than modest roof of her adopted son, giving up to him also the whole of her little fortune, which amounted to about five hundred pounds. And thus the walls of the church began to rise, in a manner built and cemented with charity and self-sacrifice, rather than with mortar and stones. The altar and pulpit were of plain wood, covered with colored paper; the walls were bare; but at last the *curé* was able to assemble his people there, to speak to them of God, to celebrate the Mass, and to teach the catechism. The admirable devotion of the good priest made others desire to emulate his example. Three or four good women, ashamed at the miserable con-

dition of the only chasuble in the parish, gave, for want of something better, their scarlet and blue umbrellas, and by joining the pieces together made a chasuble more novel than new.

Relying wholly upon divine Providence, the good *curé* engaged two sisters to teach the poor children of his parish, hired (without money) a large shed or outhouse where they might be instructed; and soon sixty little boys and seventy little girls came every day to learn, first of all, religion, which is the greatest science in the world, then that secondary knowledge which even the most humble require for the daily needs of life—reading, writing, arithmetic, etc. The two sisters, now become sisters of the poor *curé*, were provided for by him and lodged in a kind of dormitory with his mother and his old benefactress.

The expenditure of the kitchen was not very considerable; all denied themselves cheerfully and generously for the love of God. For more than a year this little community only consumed a kilo of meat a week. The butchers of the place, fortunately for themselves, had other customers.

The *curé* had also constructed a kind of presbytery. During the first winter the little household did their best to keep from freezing; there were no panes in the casements, nor even frames in the windows. In the night they hung an old straw mat over the opening, and in the daytime they walked about and breathed upon their fingers.

But if the holy priest were poor as regards temporal wants, he had become very rich in spiritual possessions; in four or five years he had gained for God the souls of almost all his rustic parishioners. Upon his arrival he had found fourteen practical Christians out of more than eight hundred inhabitants; now he could count only twenty who had not fulfilled their Easter duties. And they not only fulfilled the obligation—the stringent obligation—which the Church imposes, but a lively, earnest piety had completely metamorphosed a great number among them; so much so, that at the principal feasts many hundreds approached the sacraments. Every Sunday fifty or sixty of the congregation came together to the church, half an hour before the High Mass, at the sound of the bell, and received communion; every day there was a comparatively numerous attendance at Mass, and ten or twelve devout Catholics, the best and holiest in the new parish, and the joy of their good *curé*, had adopted the sacred custom of communicating every day. The children especially filled him with hope; after their first communion he impressed upon them

as much as possible the necessity and happiness of frequent communion; almost all received our divine Lord into their hearts every week or every fortnight, and the least fervent every month. "I have," said the happy *curé* to me, "little boys and little girls of thirteen and fourteen years old, who, while minding their flocks and working in the fields, never lose sight of the Presence of God all through the day. These poor little ones have a great love for the Blessed Sacrament, and not being able to do more, for want of time and opportunity, they receive communion every Sunday."

Besides poverty, which is so rich and so fruitful a treasure; besides the holy example of austerity, penance, and devotion which he had given to his parishioners, it was by the Holy Communion that this excellent priest had worked such a marvellous change. Kind and merciful to sinners, confiding in the goodness of the Saviour, and in the powerful efficacy of the Holy Eucharist, he gave Jesus to souls, leaving it to Him to work a divine work within them, and to strengthen their good will. For such confidence many reproached him; he was accused of imprudence and innovation; but facts, which speak more clearly than words, answered for him and silenced his detractors. Two or three times he was even publicly accused to the see, and was sent for to justify his conduct; and each time his bishop sent him back with renewed benedictions and warm encouragement. This opposition formed his principal cross, more painful than all his privations, and he told me that he offered them to God to obtain the conversion of the most hardened sinners.

He made two or three journeys to Paris, and obtained, from several rich and pious families, vestments and the help he needed to supply his church with all that was necessary: a beautiful altar of stone, a handsome pulpit, sacred vessels in silver-gilt, chasubles, copes, etc., the stations of the cross, a bell, and, lastly, a parochial library, which furnished him with the works of St. Francis de Sales, and other good and useful books, to distribute in every family for the winter evenings. And to-day, the greatly loved and honored father of this great spiritual family, which he made his own at the price of so many sacrifices, he rests in constant work, still bringing souls to Jesus Christ year after year, and counting as nothing those trials which are changed by the love of the sweet and merciful Saviour into perfect joy and abundant consolation.

May Our Lord raise up among us many priests with the apostolic spirit; may He make their labors and exertions fruitful, and by their ministry restore to life the spiritually dead, awake the sleeping, give

warmth to the tepid, strengthen the weak and slothful, and what is better and higher still—perfect the good and raise up saints.

EXECUTION OF THE CARABINEER GUTH.

On the 3d of February, 1850, a soldier, the carabineer Jean Guth, aged thirty years, was condemned to death, and shot for the murder of his captain. I was then chaplain to the military prisons of Paris.

I saw poor Guth for the first time at the prison of the council of war, when he was only accused. He received me with joy. "I had," he said, "one moment of madness and desperation. This came to me as a judgment from God, whom I had abandoned. Now I have only Him, henceforth He is everything to me; I have nothing left but Him." I told him that I would return the next day to reconcile him to God. He thanked me earnestly. "How much good you do me!" he exclaimed. "I do indeed need your help." On Sunday, the 26th of January, the day before his condemnation, he received communion, and so deep was the impression made upon him that he was quite overcome with emotion. He believed that I should not come till late in the day, and was perfectly ready to fast until five in the evening, so lively was his faith.

At his trial he was considered impassive; he was only peaceful and resigned; he even intended to declare at the tribunal that he recognized the justice of his sentence; but he had not courage, as he had great difficulty in speaking French, being Alsatian, almost German, by birth. "It is better as it is," he said to me, when giving me an account of the trial; "I should, perhaps, have said too much. It is sufficient that God knows everything. Why should I think of men? I have nothing left but God." Then he added: "If I had always prayed as now, I should not have done that. My father used to say to me, 'Fear God always; pray to Him. He is our only Good; everything else is nothing.' But in the regiment it is so difficult. You are surrounded by young men who only speak of evil." He refused to appeal to another council. "My sentence is just," he said to me many times; "it would be to go against God. I do not desire to be pardoned; it is a necessary punishment. I must expiate my sin. Only I would not be shot at once, but have time for repentance." When the keeper of the prison asked him if he desired to sue for a repeal, he said: "Why should I? that is not my hope."

On Friday, the 31st, he was transferred to the prison de l'Abbaye,

to await the result of a petition for pardon which I had addressed, in his name, to the President of the republic.

He was always calm and peaceful. On Sunday morning, the 2d of February, I brought him the Holy Communion for the second time. I did not know that his end was so near. He was full of recollection. He wept in communicating. It was in the evening, at a quarter-past six, that the commander, Monsieur Dupont, announced to him the fatal news. I was with him at the time. He heard it with resignation. He then repeated that his sentence was just, and that he utterly repented his sin. I remained alone with the poor condemned man. "I quite expected it," he said, "but not so soon—in a few days. Ah, well! that does not make much difference; and, strange to say, I am quite calm. I have no weight upon my mind."

I remained with him for two hours. I pointed out to him some passages in the "Imitation" of Jesus Christ, and I saw his whole face light up at some of the words I read. He spoke very little, but I felt that the purest and most elevated expressions of faith and love to God found an echo in his heart.

When I told him that I should come with him as far as Versailles, he exclaimed: "Oh, you are giving yourself too much trouble about me!"

I left him at about half-past ten, and when I exhorted him to pray constantly, he answered: "Yes, I must make much of the time that is left to me. I must not think of being tired. I shall have time to rest with God."

In the morning, at about half-past three, I took him the Holy Viaticum. At four o'clock the prison-van was at the door. He thanked the keeper for the kindness he had shown him. There were tears in many eyes. "Farewell, Guth," said the keeper; "die like a brave soldier and a good Christian!"

During the three hours and a half that the journey lasted, his calmness never forsook him. God was with him in that hour. "Our Lord is with us, my child," I said to him; "and if we have Jesus, we have everything!" "Yes, yes," he answered, "I am quite content." And a moment afterward: "I hardly like to say so, but I feel as if I were going to a wedding; God has permitted it all for my good, to save my soul. It is a great consolation to me that my poor captain died a Christian death. I shall soon see him again; he is praying for me." He recited the Rosary, his eyes fixed upon the crucifix with love. "My God has saved me," he said; "I believe

that He will be very merciful to me. He went up to Calvary carrying His cross. I am with Him; and, like Him, I will gladly submit to everything if they desire to bind me or bandage my eyes."

"Soldiers are lost," he said again, "because they will not listen to you. Without you, without religion, the whole world would be lost." We passed close to the barracks where he had committed his crime. He said a prayer for the captain. "I cannot conceive what possessed me," he exclaimed; "I did not desire his death!" And a minute after: "If by a single sin I could escape being shot, I would not commit it! That is what I feel. I have nothing left on earth. I am going home to God."

At half-past seven we stopped in the plain of Satory, near Versailles. It was the field of the military manœuvres. We descended. Guth was pale, but composed. An officer read his sentence.

"I recognize the justice of my punishment," said the condemned; "I repent of my crime; I ask pardon from God, and I love Him with my whole heart."

Then he knelt down. For the last time I gave him the Crucifix to kiss. "Father," he repeated, in a changed voice, "into Thy hands I commend my spirit. . . . I unite my death to that of Jesus, my Saviour! Farewell! Farewell!"

I embraced him. He extended his arms in the form of a cross and bent his head.

An instant later human justice was satisfied, and the soul of the poor criminal, purified and transfigured by religion, entered into the bosom of Him who pardons everything to the repentant sinner!

THE BITER BITTEN.

Two young officers, when walking one day in Paris, entered the Church of the Assumption. After having looked at the pictures, the architecture; after having thought of everything excepting God, they were going out, when they perceived a priest wearing a surplice kneeling down close to a confessional. He seemed to be waiting for some one.

"Look! do you see that *curé?*" said one of the young men, laughingly, to his companion. "What is he doing there?"

"Waiting for you, perhaps," replied the other.

"Not very probable," answered the first; "but what will you bet that I go up and speak to him?"

"I bet you will not."

"And what is more, that I will confess to him?"

"I bet you will not."

"I bet that I will. Come, what do you bet?"

"A good dinner."

"With champagne?"

"With champagne."

"Done! . . . Agreed! . . . Wait for me, and watch the manœuvre."

And the foolish young fellow advances boldly to the priest of God. He whispers to him, and he rises immediately, enters the confessional; then the officer goes in at one of the sides and kneels down, just as is always done.

"Will he ever have the effrontery?" thought the other. And with a smile of admiration on his lips, he sat down to wait for the improvised penitent.

This went on for about seven or eight minutes, at the end of which he thought the joke had lasted a little too long. At length, after more than a quarter of an hour, the officer rose, came out of the confessional, and left the church after making a sign to his friend. His face was serious, and he seemed deeply moved. However, he laughed about the adventure with his companion, but would not tell him why he had remained so long. Upon the first excuse he left him and returned home. Two days after, he again entered the Assumption, and, after having prayed for a long time, approached the same confessional where the same priest had just gone in.

This time he remained for half an hour; there were tears in his eyes when he came out. . . . Peace and joy were written in his face. . . . He had just received the pardon of his sins. . . . And what was the meaning of this? and what had happened to him two days before? It happened as follows, and I tell it in the officer's own words:

The priest to whom he addressed himself very quickly perceived, by the tone of his penitent, that he was listening to no serious confession.

"This is all in mockery, monsieur," he said gently, interrupting him. "You are doing wrong; you must not scoff at the things of God nor at His appointed ministers. But I pardon you from my heart, and I pray God to do the same."

The officer, a little disconcerted, tried to excuse himself.

"No, no," said the good priest, smiling. "You have done wrong; let us say no more about it. Still, since you have sought me out,

allow me to speak to you for a minute, to ask you what you are—what is your calling?"

"Willingly, father," replied the young man; "I am an officer."

"Ah! that is a very fine calling. And what is your grade?"

"I am a sub-lieutenant; I come from Saint-Cyr."

"And after that what will you become?"

"I shall be a lieutenant."

"And afterward?"

"Afterward a captain."

"And afterward?"

"A commander; then lieutenant-colonel, then colonel, then general, then lieutenant-general, perhaps."

"And what age will you be then?"

"Well, if I have good luck, and if I go to Africa, about forty or forty-five."

"And do you not intend to marry?"

"Oh, yes, I shall marry."

"Well, then, you will be a general and married; and after that what will you become?"

"After that? why there is nothing left but the grade of a marshal."

"And supposing that you should obtain that, what would you do afterward?"

"Upon my word, I should do nothing more. I should rest with my wife and my children."

"And afterward?"

"How afterward?"

The serious tone of the priest troubled the young officer.

"Ah, well! I shall die afterward."

"And afterward?"

The young man shuddered. Of this afterward he never thought.

"You give me no answer, monsieur," said the confessor gravely. "You are ignorant, perhaps, of what will come to pass afterward. You have told me only of what will happen before. But now I will tell you, in my turn, what will happen afterward. After your death, your soul will appear before Jesus Christ, and will be judged, not according to that human glory which will have vanished like a dream, but according to the good or evil it has done. If you have been virtuous, a faithful observer of the laws of God and of His Church; if you have been humble, pure, chaste, just, and merciful to others,—in a word, if you have been a good and faithful Christian,

you will be saved, and will enter into the immutable happiness of eternity. If, on the contrary, you have followed the bent of your evil passions; if you have forgotten the services of God; if you have been proud, sensual, negligent, merciless, and unjust,—in a word, if you have not been a true Christian, you will be damned, understand me, monsieur. General, marshal, though you may be, you will be judged by Him who has no respect of persons, and you will hear the thunder of the terrible sentence: 'Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'

"Now I have only one word more to say to you.

"It was no slight offence to come thus to mock me, face to face. I demand some satisfaction which, as a man of honor, you cannot refuse.

"I demand, understand me,—I demand that during one week, every night before you sleep, you shall think of what I have just said to you, and shall pronounce these words: 'I shall die; but I laugh at it. After my death I shall be judged; but I laugh at it. After my judgment I shall be eternally damned; but I laugh at it.'

"This is the reparation that I exact. Will you give me your word of honor that you will not fail to grant it?"

His penitent, wholly entangled in the snare he had intended for another, dared not refuse. He promised upon his word of honor to do what was asked from him.

"Go, then, monsieur," said the priest; "I pardon you from my heart, and I promise to remember you before the throne of God."

From a sentiment of loyalty and honor, the young officer performed the penance thus imposed. He made no resistance, and two days after his heart changed, and, sincerely repentant, he returned in good earnest to that confessional which he had only entered in jest. He has since become an excellent Christian.

If we were wise, we should reflect every day upon the shortness of life, and the unchangeable eternity which awaits us; and by such means we, too, should become good and faithful Christians.

GENERAL CAMBRONNE.

THE celebrated Cambronne, one of the bravest generals of the First Empire, commenced his military career by the lowest grades.

He was a corporal in 1795, and was quartered at Nantes. Notwithstanding his youth (he was scarcely twenty), he had already contracted that deplorable habit which is the ruin of so many soldiers,

the habit of drinking, and even of getting thoroughly intoxicated. And as the young man was high-spirited and hot-tempered, it was scarcely safe to cross or vex him when his natural excitability was increased by copious libations of wine.

One day, when intoxicated, he forgot himself so entirely as to strike an officer who gave him an order. He was tried by court-martial and condemned to death, as is customary in such cases.

Nevertheless, the colonel of his regiment had learned to appreciate the energy, courage, and intelligence of the young soldier. He applied to a representative of the people, a commissary of the government, then at Nantes, and asked pardon for Cambronne.

"It is impossible," replied the commissary. "It is necessary to make an example, or discipline will be lost in the army. Corporal Cambronne must die."

But still the colonel persisted, and pleaded his cause so well that he obtained the pardon of his soldier, but on one condition only, and that was that he would never get intoxicated again.

The worthy colonel went at once to the military prison and sent for Cambronne.

"You have committed a serious offence, corporal," he said to him.

"That is true, colonel; but you see the consequences. It has cost me my life."

"Perhaps," said the colonel.

"How so, perhaps? You know the rigor of military law. I expect no pardon. I have nothing but death before me."

"No; you must not die yet. I bring you the pardon of which you despaired. I have procured it with much trouble from the commissary of the government. He remits your punishment, and even restores you to your former grade, but on one condition."

"A condition! Speak, colonel, speak; I will do anything to save my life, and still more to save my honor!"

"It is on the condition that you never get drunk any more."

"Oh, colonel, that is impossible!"

"What, impossible! and to escape death! You are going to be shot to-morrow; think of that!"

"Do you see, colonel, that in order to keep this condition I should be forced to give up drinking wine altogether; for Cambronne and the bottle are such good friends that they never know how to part. It is impossible to stop! So you see I cannot promise never to get drunk again"

"But, wretched man, can you not promise to drink no more wine?"

"None at all?"

"Certainly."

"Ah! that is a serious thing to propose, no wine at all. None at all! And, colonel, if I gave this promise, what warrant have you have that I should keep it?"

"Your word of honor. I want nothing else. I know you well, and I am convinced that if you give it you will keep it."

And as the condenmed man remained silent, he added: "Well, Cambronne, what have you decided?"

"You are too good to me, colonel," replied Cambronne in a moved and serious tone. "I thank you for your confidence; I appreciate it even more than the pardon that you bring me. . . . God hears us." Then, lifting his hand: "I, Cambronne, swear to you that one drop of wine shall never touch my lips again during the whole of my life. . Are you satisfied, colonel?"

"Yes, my friend," he replied, pleased and touched by what he had just heard. "Yes, I am satisfied with you. To-morrow you will be free. Be a brave soldier, and employ in the service of your country the life she gives you back to-day."

The next day Corporal Cambronne returned to his regiment and resumed his former duties.

Twenty-five years after Corporal Cambronne had become General Cambronne; he had commanded the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, and had displayed remarkable courage in that heroic retreat which every one knows.

After the fall of the Empire he lived quietly at Paris, loved and honored by all.

His former colonel, broken down by advancing years and by the fatigues of service, had also retired from military life. He knew that General Cambronne was at Paris, and invited him to dine with him. He also invited several old brothers-in-arms, and prepared quite a banquet for the occasion. The place of honor was given to Cambronne, on the right hand of the master of the house. When they were at table the colonel offered his guest a glass of old wine, of great price, which was always reserved for special occasions. Cambronne looked at his host with surprise. "What are you offering me?" he exclaimed.

"Why, some Rhenish wine, general, and of a very superior quality; it is more than a hundred years old; you will find none like it in Paris." And as Cambronne seemed irritated at his words,

he added, "Why, General, I assure you it is excellent; just taste it, and you"——

"And my word of honor, colonel, my word of honor!" exclaimed Cambronne, striking the table. "And Nantes! and the prison! and the pardon! Have you forgotten it all, my good friend? For whom do you take Cambronne? From that very day a drop of wine has never touched my lips. I swore to you, and I have kept my word."

The colonel, full of admiration for such unfaltering fidelity, pressed his wine no longer, but commended himself anew for having preserved such a man to France.

Men correct their vices when they desire to do so. The word impossible is not in our language. Still less is it a Christian word. A firm resolution and an earnest desire overcome all obstacles.

THE HISTORY OF AN OLD BEGGAR.

At the door of one of the churches of Paris an old beggar, known by the name of Jacques, came every day, for many years, to sit on one of the steps of the temple and ask for alms. He seemed a downcast, miserable old man. He scarcely ever spoke, but contented himself with bending his head when anything was given to him. A gold cross might be seen upon his breast, only partially hidden by his tattered garments.

A young ecclesiastic, M. l'Abbé Paulin de ——, celebrated Mass habitually at this church, and never omitted, as he entered, to give some small offering to poor Jacques.

Belonging to a rich and noble family, M. Paulin de —— had consecrated himself to God in the priesthood, and spent all his possessions among the poor. Without knowing him, old Jacques grew to love the good young priest.

One day the Abbé Paulin missed old Jacques from his accustomed place; and, as he remarked that his absence was prolonged, he grew uneasy about the old man and made inquiries as to where he lived: and having learned his address, one morning, after Mass, he turned his steps toward the dwelling of old Jacques.

He knocked at the door of an attic on the sixth floor. A feeble voice answered from within, and he entered.

Jacques was lying stretched upon a miserable pallet; his face was pale as death, his eyes were dull and heavy.

"Ah! it is you, Monsieur l'Abbé," he said to the priest, when he

saw him. "It is very good of you to come and see a miserable man like me. I do not deserve it."

"What are you talking about, my good Jacques?" said the Abbé. "Do you not know that the priest is the friend of the unfortunate? Besides," he added, smiling, "we are old acquaintances."

"O Monsieur, if you knew! . . . you would not speak to me like that. . . . No, no; do not speak to me kindly; I am a miserable man, cursed by God."

"Cursed by God! Do you think so? Ah! my poor Jacques, never utter such words as those. If you have done wrong—repent, confess; God is infinite goodness; He pardons everything to him who repents."

"Oh, no! He will never pardon me."

"And why not? Do you not repent?"

"Repent! do I repent?" cried Jacques, raising himself upon his bed and gazing wildly at the priest. "For thirty years I have been repenting. . . . And yet I am cursed . . . cursed!"

The good priest tried to comfort and encourage him, but in vain. A terrible mystery was hidden in the depths of his heart, and despair prevented the guilty man from revealing his crime.

At last, conquered by the gentleness and the goodness of the Abbé, the miserable Jacques decided, and in a broken voice he told the following story:

"I was steward in a rich and noble family when the Revolution of the last century broke out. My master and mistress were goodness itself to me. . . . M. le Comte, Madame la Comtesse, their two daughters, and their son. . . . I owed everything to them; my position, my education, all the comforts I enjoyed. . . . When the Reign of Terror came, . . . I betrayed them. . . . They were hidden, . . . I knew where. . . . I denounced them so that I might have their possessions, which were promised to the denunciators. . . . They were condemned to death,—all! except the little Paulin, who was too young."

An involuntary cry came from the lips of the priest, and a cold sweat stood upon his forehead.

"Monsieur," continued the old beggar, who did not perceive the emotion excited by his words, "Monsieur, it was horrible! . . . I heard them condemned to death. . . . I saw them all four placed in the tumbril, . . . and I saw their four heads fall beneath the knife. . . . Monster! monster that I am! . . . From that time I have known neither peace nor rest. . . . I weep, I pray for them

. . . I see them always,—there before me. See, they are there, beneath that curtain."

And speaking thus, Jacques pointed with his trembling hand to a curtain which covered part of the wall. "This crucifix which you see over my bed belonged to Monsieur . . . ; and this little gold cross round my neck was the one which Madame always wore. . . . O God! what crime! what agony! what repentance! Monsieur l'Abbé, have pity upon me! do not repulse me! pray for the most criminal and the most miserable of men!"

The priest was kneeling by the bedside, pale as death. For many minutes he remained motionless. Then rising, perfectly calm, he made the sign of the cross, and drawing aside the curtain he saw two portraits.

Jacques uttered a cry when he saw them, and threw himself back upon his pallet.

The priest was weeping.

"Jacques," he said in a trembling voice, "I am come to bring you pardon from God. I will hear your confession," and sitting by the bedside he received old Jacques' confession.

When the dying man had ended: "Jacques," said the Abbé Paulin, "God has just forgiven you . . . but . . . that is not all . . . I also,—I forgive you . . . for love of Him. For you have killed my father, my mother, and my two sisters!"

An expression of horror passed swiftly over the face of the dying man. He opened his lips, murmured some inarticulate words . . . then fell backward on his bed. . . .

The priest approached. The beggar was dead.

THE OLD MAN.

Every one knows, at least by reputation, the great seminary of Saint Sulpice, established at Paris, close to the magnificent church of the same name.

This seminary was founded in the time of Louis XIII., by the Abbé Olier, a man of great virtue and sanctity.

Before establishing themselves at Paris, M. Olier and his first companions were all living together at Vaugirard, and preparing themselves by the practice of penance, prayer, poverty, the care of the unfortunate, in a word, by a Christian life, to become, in the hands of God, fitting instruments for the great designs He had formed concerning them.

M. Olier often assembled his pious companions in a common hall, and exhorted them with indefatigable zeal to advance in the path of perfection, to become holy priests; and, with this end in view, to fight without ceasing, to mortify, to immolate the old man, that is to say, the evil inclinations of a nature corrupted by sin and inclined to evil by concupiscence.

The house was kept by an old gardener named Thomas, who lived with his wife in a little cottage at the end of the garden. Thomas had remarked these secret meetings of M. Olier and his disciples; he had spoken of them to his wife, and both had wondered what was the object of these assemblies. Old Thomas, as inquisitive as his wife, resolved one day to fathom the mystery, and having no other means of satisfying his curiosity, to go and listen at the door.

In the evening, on the very day that he had taken this noble resolutionn, M. Olier held a meeting. Thomas had noticed everything. He advances, therefore, upon the tips of his toes, presses one ear against the door, and hears some one speaking. He listens, he distinguishes the voice of M. Olier; and as the silence of the auditors was profound, he distinctly hears these words: "My friends, my friends, why should we wait? Let us set to work this very day: too long our cowardice has shrunk from the task. Let us sacrifice the old man without pity, without listening to his murmurs and his cries. This is the only price upon which we can have peace. He is an enemy who is always seeking our destruction, who is always near to us, who will destroy us if we do not sacrifice him with courage. What is the use of making resolutions if we do not keep them. We must hesitate no longer, the moment is come. The old man must not live, everything must be given up to the new," etc.

Thomas was the only old man in the house; judge of his surprise and his terror when he heard M. Olier exhort his companions to sacrifice the old man! Evidently they were speaking of him, and talking of getting another gardener that very day to fill his place. Pale as death, he hurried back to his own home, and calling his wife in haste he exclaimed: "Quick, quick, we must escape from here at once or we are lost. They are going to murder us; I heard them say so, this very evening. We have just time to pack up our things. Who would have believed it? Men who look so holy, and who have shown me so much kindness! You must never trust to appearances."

And then he began packing all his valuables in two or three large baskets, at the same time bewailing his hard fate, and giving his terrified wife full particulars of what he had just heard. But it was

too late! While he was making his preparations for flight, the door opened and M. Olier appeared upon the threshold.

"Thomas," he said gently, "we have been ringing for the last five minutes for supper; didn't you hear? Why . . . what are you doing? What is this luggage? Where are you going like this?"

Old Thomas fully believed his last moment was come. His hair stood up upon his head; he stammered an unintelligible reply. . . . He tried to see if M. Olier held any kind of weapon in his hand; then he could contain himself no longer: "Wicked man! at last I know you! Hypocrite, traitor, assassin! I have heard everything . . . help! rescue!"

The poor Abbé stood perfectly bewildered. "Why, what is the matter with you, Thomas?" he said; "are you mad?"

"No, no, I am not mad!" cried the old gardener. "Would to God that I were mad! help! help! It is no use to pretend any longer; I tell you I have heard everything; I was at the door when you were encouraging your traitorous companions to kill me this very evening. Oh, what a wicked, cruel thing! When I loved you so much, why should you kill me? Could you not send me away if you had found another servant to fill my place?"

"But I cannot imagine what you mean," replied M. Olier, more and more astonished. "Explain yourself; who ever thought of killing you?"

"You yourself, monsieur."

"I?"

"Ah, yes! I recognized your voice, so holy that no other can come up to it. I heard you telling them to sacrifice the old man, who was always like an enemy in the house, and to hesitate no longer to follow your advice."

At these words M. Olier understood the misunderstanding, and, laughing merrily, he ran out of the cottage to tell the story to his companions.

Then they all came back with him, and had the greatest trouble to persuade him that they were not talking of him. It was not till after a long time, and when he had talked often with the good Abbé Olier, that he was convinced of his mistake and ceased to carry arms concealed in case of a surprise.

All of which proves that old people should not be inquisitive.

THE CALIPH, THE SHEPHERD, AND HAPPINESS.

A CALIPH of Bagdad, in what century I know not, was out hunting one day, when he was thrown off his horse, and would certainly have been killed if a shepherd had not stopped the courser at the risk of his own life.

Covered with wounds and bruises, the Caliph was carried back to his palace; for even Caliphs are bruised and hurt if they fall down.

As soon as he was a little recovered he desired to see his preserver.

The poor shepherd was soon found, and brought to the palace and into the presence of the sick potentate.

"You have saved my life, my son," said he; "I desire to reward you for your services; therefore I swear to you by my beard that I will give you all that you shall ask. You see that my generosity is equal to my power."

"Oh! Sire," replied the shepherd, "I have not long to think. I should be perfectly happy if I had but one little thing, and that is a cottage of my own with a little garden, where I could live in peace with my wife and children."

"You are not difficult to please," said the Caliph, smiling; and calling the Vizier, he commanded him to give the shepherd immediately a little house and meadow situated near Bagdad.

And very enchanted was the shepherd then; so much so that on his way home he could scarcely refrain from singing for joy, and would stop every one he met to tell them of his good fortune, and that very evening he took possession of his new domain.

Not far from his house he had a neighbor, whose cottage was almost similar to his, and they soon made acquaintance with each other. This neighbor had a little flock, of which he made quite a small income every year.

"I entirely forgot to ask the Caliph for some animals," said our friend to himself one day; "my neighbor is far better off than I What is the use of a field if you have neither cows nor sheep?"

And early the next morning he set off to the palace and asked to see the Caliph, who had given orders that he was always to be admitted.

"Well, my friend," said the Prince kindly, "are you happy, and is your house comfortable?"

"Very comfortable, Sire," replied the shepherd, "and I am very happy; but I find that there is one thing that is quite indispensable,

and that is a flock like my neighbor's. I shall never be comfortably off until I have some animals. I come to entreat your Majesty to bestow upon me just a few."

"Certainly, you ought to have cattle if you have a field," replied the Caliph; then—"See that he has what he wants, and let him choose among my flocks. Go, my friend, and be happy if you can at such a price."

And the shepherd chose just a few, that is to say, two dozen and a half of the finest beasts the Caliph possessed.

"I shall be richer than my neighbor," he exclaimed, rubbing his hands gleefully. "Now I am the happiest man in the world."

Yes; but his field proved too small for such a handsome flock. And then only a quarter of a mile away there was a very pretty and productive farm.

Our friend could contain himself no longer. He grew troubled and discontented. "We shall never be happy," he said one evening to his wife, "until we have a little farm like that yonder; I am going to Bagdad on business; I shall try to see the Caliph, and ask him to give me that little property. What would that be to him?"

It was no sooner said than done. The demand was made the next day. The Caliph, after a friendly reproach, gave the farm; at the same time advising his protégé not to let his idea of aggrandizement carry him too far.

"Oh, no," replied Ben Adab (that was the name of the peasant farmer), "there is no possibility of that now, for I have need of nothing more."

Nevertheless, three months after, he presented himself again before his benefactor, a little shamefaced, it is true, but fully determined to ask for something more.

He had seen a grand seignior of Bagdad; the splendor of his suite, his life of pleasure and repose, the magnificence of his palace had all proved so seductive that the farmer had said to himself: "I shall never be happy until all this pleasure and magnificence is mine;" and therefore, relying upon the promise of the all-powerful Caliph, he came again, requesting to be made a great lord.

The Caliph made objections, but was quickly reminded of his oath; he had sworn by his beard! Therefore, behold Ben Adab metamorphosed into a grand seignior, possessor of a splendid estate, owner of the most beautiful castles in the neighborhood of Bagdad, waited on by thousands of slaves; he has only to utter a word, to express a desire, and everything is carried out according to his wishes. But

he has nothing whatever to do; he can neither read nor write, and he finds that everything grows wearisome.

"Upon my word," he said to himself at last, "I cannot live such a life as this. I was never born to live in obscurity. I must make a name in the world, and gain influence in the State—but in the sphere of politics! Ah! it is there that I am fitted to shine."

And after having well considered this idea, after having formed plans (sufficiently absurd as may well be imagined), after having safely compared his own capacities with those of the different government officials, he applied to the Caliph and informed him that if he desired to render him happy, and to carry out his word in full, he must give him the appointment of his first minister, the Grand Vizier.

The Caliph was on the point of growing angry and causing Ben Adab to expiate his vain temerity, when the idea struck him in a new and ridiculous light. Who could tell? Perhaps beneath this rugged bark there was concealed the germ of a great man. Briefly, he conceded his request, and commanded the turban of the Grand Vizier to be given him at once.

This self-elected vizier next enters upon his duties; and, to begin with, he understands nothing at all. He is beset with demands, with complaints, with petitions. He makes countless mistakes; he grants what he ought to refuse, and refuses what he ought to grant. The Caliph rejects some plans which he submits to his approval. He is indignant, distracted, ill at ease; he has never been so miserable.

"What a life! what a life!" he exclaimed one evening when retiring to rest; "is it possible for a vizier to live a month? I am only the chief slave of the Caliph. It is he who opposes me in everything that I wish to do. I see clearly how it is; in order to be happy and to be at peace it is necessary to be the master of all. If the Caliph would give up his place to me, everything would go well."

He thought of it all the night. He grew more and more convinced that happiness could be secured only by absolute power; and the next morning, before the Caliph had risen, his self-elected vizier presented himself by his bedside and humbly requested him to allow him to take his place.

The Caliph thought he was dreaming; he rubbed his eyes, he sprang up in astonishment; he called a slave to bite his finger (who, having bitten too hard, was immediately condemned to receive a hundred strokes of the bastinado).

"What did you say. Repeat it," he said to Ben Adab.

"I said, Sire, that you ought to let me reign in your stead, and that this would be a great gain to every one, to the empire, to me, to yourself."

The monarch heard perfectly well this time. He rose, put on his robe, and clapped his hands. Four black slaves instantly appeared. "Turn round," he said to the vizier. Ben Adab turned. The Caliph took his spring and bestowed on him a vigorous kick, according to the Eastern fashion; then made a sign to his negroes, who seized upon the astounded vizier and hastened him on with a similar accompaniment as far as the palace gates. There they stripped him of his garments and left him in his shirt, exposed to the laughter of every passer-by.

Ashamed and confused, Ben Adab returned to his lowly calling of a shepherd, and at last died miserably. And can you guess, dear reader, who this Ben Adab is? Perhaps you may find him, or, at least, his counterpart, a little nearer than Bagdad. Perhaps in your own house; perhaps in your own room; perhaps in the very clothes you wear.

Yes, for this history is your own, it is the history of us all. We are ever seeking after happiness, and imagine we shall find it in the grade above our own. When we have enjoyed this position for a little time, we try to make another step upward, and thus we are ever seeking and yet never find.

And we are miserable—miserable through our own fault! Because we do not seek happiness there where it truly is, even in our own hearts. Because we believe that happiness depends upon our position, while it truly consists in the disposition with which we fulfil all the duties of our position, whatever it may be. We are called to be happy, rich and poor, governing and governed, small and great. For happiness God hath in love bestowed on every creature in His great creation. He alone is happy who endures with patience and serenity those trials which are inseparable from the human lot, who draws from the love of God that peace of heart which surpasses all vain earthly ideas of an unattainable felicity, who remembers that life does not last for long, and that all its troubles, if borne in a Christian spirit, will be succeeded by marvellous joys which nothing shall have power to disturb.

In a word, he alone is happy who is a good and faithful Christian. May we all be of this number, and profit by this simple story of the Caliph, the Shepherd, and Happiness.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. CECILIA, ST. VALERIAN, AND ST. TIBURTIUS.

In the reign of the Emperor Alexander Severus, under the Pontificate of St. Urban, in the year 230 of the Christian era, there lived at Rome a young virgin named Cecilia.

Rich, noble, and beautiful, Cecilia united to the choicest gifts of nature the still more precious gifts of grace. She was a Christian, though her family was heathen; and the beautiful years of her early youth were passed in prayer, in sweet meditation on the law of God, in the austerities of penance, and in the indefatigable practice of all good works. The book of the Gospels, hidden beneath her robe, rested always on her breast; and, burning with a pure and holy love for Our Lord Jesus Christ, Cecilia had solemnly vowed to have no other spouse than He. Nevertheless, the time approached when the Christian maiden would have to contend for the power to keep her promise. Incapable of understanding the sublime love which attached the heart of their child to heaven, her parents had sought a husband for her, and the spouse of Christ had been constrained to receive a suitor among men.

Valerian was the name of the young Roman destined, in the eyes of the world, to obtain the hand of Cecilia. His nobility, his beauty, the qualities of his mind and heart all rendered him worthy of such an honor. He had a brother named Tiburtius, and rejoiced with this brother, whom he tenderly loved, over the happiness in store for him. Neither understood the divine nature and the eternal duration of that happiness which Cecilia was to bring to them.

The virgin saw with fear the day of her bridal approaching, but also with that superhuman calm which faith alone can give to Christians. She had redoubled her prayers, her alms, and her penances. She wore haircloth beneath the rich embroideries of her sumptuous robe, and thus chastised her delicate flesh, and prepared herself for the terrible combats that she would doubtless soon have to sustain for Jesus Christ. Our Lord came to her Himself, and, in order to give her more courage, He allowed her guardian angel to become visible to her eyes, and to promise her, in the name of God, a continual assistance.

Nevertheless the fatal day arrived; the heart of Valerian beat high with joy, and the whole nobility of Rome assisted at the nuptials of the daughter of Cecilius

On the evening of this great day, as soon as Cecilia was alone with Valerian, filled with virtue from on high, she made known to her bridegroom in sweet and simple words that she was a Christian, that she had devoted her life to her Lord and Saviour, and that she belonged to herself no more. She added that an angel of God watched over her, and that if Valerian were but willing to enter into her views this angel would love him even as herself, and would manifest to them both his divine beauty.

The young man, troubled by these words, but captivated by the charm of that pure voice, and already secretly touched by the grace of God, answered the virgin: "What sayest thou, Cecilia? and how can I believe thy words? Let me, too, see this angel. When I shall have seen him, and shall feel assured that he is an angel of God, then I will obey thee, but if thou lovest a man like unto myself, I will pierce him through with my sword and will kill thee with him." The virgin replied calmly and sweetly: "If thou wilt follow my counsel, if thou wilt purify thyself in the fountain of the waters which spring forth to eternal life, if thou wilt believe in the one only living God who reigns in heaven, thine eyes shall see the holy angel who watches over thy bride."

"And who will purify me that I may see thy angel?" replied Valerian in astonishment.

"Near here there dwells a holy old man who can purify thee, that thou mayest see the angel of God."

"Where is this old man?"

"Go out from the town; by the third column thou wilt find some of the poor, who know me and whom I love. Thou shalt say to them: 'Cecilia sends me to you; lead me to the holy old man Urban.' Then thou shalt see him, and shalt be obedient to his word. He will clothe thee in a new garment; and upon thy return thou shalt see the holy angel then become thy friend, and whatever thou shalt ask him he will grant thee."

Without any effort, and urged by an unseen power, the young Roman left the virgin whose chaste accents had completely changed his heart. He went his way in haste, and in the early dawn he reached the Catacombs. Brought into the presence of the Pope, St. Urban, he related all that had passed. The Pope instructed him in Christianity, spoke to him of Jesus Christ, and answered all his doubts. While he was catechising him, a venerable old man, in garments of unearthly whiteness, and holding in his hand a gilded book, appeared suddenly in their midst; a bright light shone around

his head. It was the great Apostle of the pagans—St. Paul, the second pillar of the Roman Church. At this wonderful vision, Valerian, overcome with fear, fell as though lifeless, his face downward to the earth. But he felt himself uplifted, and the great Apostle speaking said: "Read the words of this book and believe; thou shalt merit to be purified and to behold the angel of the most faithful virgin, Cecilia thy spouse."

Valerian raised his eyes, and read this passage: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all." "Believest thou," said the Apostle, "believest thou this?" Valerian cried with transport, "Nothing is truer under heaven; there is nothing that I believe more firmly!" As he spoke these words the vision disappeared and he remained alone with the Pontiff. Then Urban led to the fountain of salvation him whom Heaven itself had instructed, and, when he had admitted him to the most sacred mysteries of the faith of Christ, he told him to return to his spouse.

She had not left the nuptial chamber, whose very atmosphere seemed laden with a fragrance not of earth. All the night long she had been praying. Valerian, wearing the white robe of the neophytes in which he had just been arrayed, entered Cecilia's chamber, and his reverent gaze fell first upon his kneeling bride; but by her side, his face all radiant with the light and glory of another world than ours, stood the angel of the Lord, holding in his hands two crowns of lilies and of roses. He placed one upon the head of Cecilia and the other upon that of Valerian. "Merit," he said to them, "to preserve these crowns by the purity of your hearts and the sanctity of your bodies. Now, O Valerian, son of the truth of Christ, because thou hast acquiesced in the pure desires of Cecilia, the Son of God has sent me to thee to grant all thy petitions."

Valerian, full of gratitude, only asked that the same light which enlightened him might also enlighten and regenerate the soul of his brother. "Blessed be thou, child of God," replied the angel, "God is pleased with thy request. He grants thee the soul of thy dearly loved brother, and soon you shall both be glorified with the palm of martyrdom." No words can express the holy joy of Cecilia and Valerian.

Tiburtius, desiring to be the first of all to congratulate his brother and his sister, arrived soon afterward. "What is the sweet fragrance that fills the room?" he asked. "It seems as if I were surrounded by lilies and roses, yet the season for these is past." Vale-

rian immediately took advantage of these words to unveil to him the mysteries of that sacred night. Tiburtius could not believe what he heard. Then Cecilia explained to him the truths of Christianity with all the authority of a tried, undoubting faith, and with that winning grace which accompanied all her words. And at the end of two hours, convinced of the truth, and aspiring after the grace of baptism, Tiburtius set forth, accompanied by Valerian, to seek out the holy Pontiff in the Catacombs.

Some months after, summoned before the tribunal of the cruel Almachius, Prefect of Rome, who was furious against the Christians, Valerian and Tiburtius generously confessed the name of their divine Master. Bleeding beneath the lashes of their persecutors, Valerian cried to all present in a ringing voice: "Romans, my brothers, be firm in the faith. Let not the sight of my torments shake your courage. Confess the truth. Everything in this world passes by, pain as well as pleasure. Fix your hearts on Him who alone abides forever, the Christ, the Son of the living God; He alone is the Lord, and the Roman idols are but wood and stone!"

Condemned to be beheaded, the two brothers were conducted out of Rome. Upon the way they spoke of the true God to the centurion Maximus, who accompanied them, and gained him over to Jesus Christ. They passed the night in a house close to the place of suffering. There Cecilia came to them for a last farewell. Aided by Valerian and Tiburtius, she preached to the soldiers. All asked for baptism. Priests, sent by her, instructed and baptized these new children of God. The night was passed in prayer, in acts of thanksgiving, in touching farewells.

At the dawn of day, the sacrifice of the two noble martyrs was consummated; their bleeding heads had fallen at the feet of the statue of Jupiter. Maximus followed their example without delay. Having refused to lend his aid in the cruel martyrdom of the two heroes, he was cited before the bar of Almachius; there he confessed Jesus Christ, and the Prefect had him killed immediately with the stripes of loaded scourges. Filled with holy pride at such triumphs as these, Cecilia herself preserved the sacred remains of her husband, of her brother, and of Maximus; and the Pope St. Urban placed them with honor in the crypts of the Catacombs. Cecilia, knowing that her hour was near, prepared herself with fervor for the combat. She gave the rest of her possessions to the poor. She preached Jesus Christ with renewed ardor, and during these last days of her life she gained over to the Christian faith more than four hundred persons.

whom the Pontiff came to baptize himself in the house of the virgin, the spouse of Christ. It was in the midst of these holy works that she was summoned to appear at the Prætorium

It was on the 19th of November that Cecilia, attired as the ladies of the Roman nobility upon festival days, presented herself at the tribunal.

"What is thy name?" demanded the cruel Prefect, enraged at the sight of so gentle, yet so fearless a victim.

"Among men I am called Cecilia," replied the virgin; "but Christian is my noblest name."

"What is thy condition?"

"I am a native of Rome, of a noble and patrician race."

"Of that I am aware; it is of thy religion that I question thee."

"Then thy interrogation was inexact, since it required two answers."

"And whence comes thy assurance?" asked Almachius, greatly disconcerted.

"From a pure conscience and an undoubting faith in the Christ, the Son of God."

"Knowest thou not, proud woman, that our divine emperors have given me power over thy life or death? Art thou ignorant that it is forbidden to confess that name?"

"Firmness is not pride," replied Cecilia. "Thy emperors are in error as well as thyself. Their law proves our innocence. If it were a crime to confess this Name, should we be willing to suffer for an evil cause? If thou didst not fear to hear the truth, I would point out to thee, besides, that thou hast just uttered an undoubted falsehood."

"How so?" said the astonished Prefect.

"Thou saidst that thy princes had given thee power over life and death. Thou hast lied in saying that."

"I lied?" repeated Almachius in bewilderment.

"Yes," answered Cecilia; "thou hast only power over death. Thou canst kill, but canst thou give or restore life? Say, therefore, that thy emperors have made thee the minister of death, but nothing more."

Almachius restrained his fury.

"Miserable woman," he said, "forsake these vain chimeras. Thou hast fallen into error, and thy example seduces others. Why shouldst thou prefer to suffer when thou canst enjoy pleasures and riches?"

"Thou speakest like a man of little wisdom," said the virgin with severe majesty. "Thou art ignorant of what thou sayest. For us, children of the light, we know the truth. We prepare ourselves by work for the rest that is to come. We live, it is true, in poverty and penance; but the day is coming when we shall reap the fruit of our sacrifices. To suffer and to die for Jesus Christ is to us a gain; we shall rejoice forever. But those who, in their blindness, now triumph and rejoice, shall weep for all eternity."

"Then," replied the Prefect, "we and our invincible emperors shall have for our heritage nothing but eternal woe?"

"Thou and thy princes," cried Cecilia; "are you not men, and must you not die? God shall judge you, and you shall render to Him a terrible account for your power."

"Enough of this," said the Prefect, beside himself with anger, and, pointing to the statues of Jupiter, of Mars, and of Romulus, "Sacrifice to the gods," he said, "or thou shalt die."

"To the gods?" said Cecilia gravely. "Art thou blind? Where seest thou gods? For my part I see nothing but stones sculptured by the hand of man, and for two talents of gold I will make thee as many of these gods as thou shalt desire. God is in heaven. Since thou hast been speaking to me, thou hast said nothing of which I have not shown thee the falsity and the injustice. Do with me what shall please thee; the Christ is in my heart, and He will enable me to triumph over the whole universe."

Trembling with rage, he ordered the Christian maiden to be led back to her own house. Executioners followed her, with orders to suffocate her with the flaming vapor of the caldron belonging to the bath. Almachius feared a mutiny if she should suffer in public. The virgin was shut up within this hall, which is still to be seen at Rome. During the whole of the day and the night her executioners urged on the fires of the caldron in vain. Like the young Hebrews in the burning furnace of Babylon, Cecilia, miraculously preserved, sang the praises of God, and enjoyed the freshness of a celestial dew.

Almachius learned this miracle with terror; in dismay he sent a lictor with orders to cease from useless efforts, and to cut off the head of this woman whom the fire could not harm. The executioner struck three times, but his hands faltered and failed to deal out death, and so he fled, leaving Cecilia stretched bleeding on the flagstones of the bath.

The holy martyr lived three days, dying in slow agony. Surrounded by the poor, of whom she was the mother, she preached

Jesus Christ to them with her dying breath. The Pope St. Urban received her last sighs. Before now, she had given her house to the Roman Church, desiring that it should be changed into a Christian sanctuary.

The Pope, out of respect for this holy body, would not allow anyone to touch it, but placed it himself in a coffin of cypress, in the same posture in which it had been left by the blessed soul of the virgin martyr when it had taken its flight to the bosom of God. It was carried with due solemnity to the Catacombs, and laid near to the bodies of St. Valerian, St. Tiburtius, and St. Maximus.

About three hundred years after, during the Pontificate of Clement VIII., it was found intact; it was lying on the right side, the hands clasped and near to the knees, the head cut by the sword and turned to the ground. It was clothed in a white robe richly embroidered in gold. Cloths stained with blood were at the feet of the virgin martyr. Her precious relics were then united to those of her husband, his brother, St. Maximus, and St. Urban, and transported to the basilica of St. Cecilia (at Rome); it is the very house in which Cecilia died. They are venerated beneath the high altar of this celebrated church, and forty lamps burn night and day before them.

The 22d of November is the feast of St. Cecilia.

May this holy virgin deign to pray for our country, and obtain for it the grace of faith, of conversion, and of final perseverance.

THE CATACOMBS OF ROME.

THE name of Catacombs (Greek *kata*, *kumbos*) has been given to the immense subterranean vaults which the Christians excavated all round the city during the three first centuries of the Church, in order that they might religiously bury their dead, and might celebrate the holy mysteries without fear, and also as a place of refuge during the fury of persecution.

It is impossible to give any idea of the immensity of this subterranean city, composed of long narrow corridors cut out of the soft sandy rock, and intersecting one another to such an extent that no one could fail to lose their way who attempted to traverse them without the help of a guide or of a very long experience.

There are about thirty catacombs known to us. The largest and most celebrated is the Catacomb (or cemetery) of St. Calixtus, so called from the name of the Pope whose body was laid there in 222,

LOST IN THE CATACOMBS OF ROME.

The Martyrs of the Catacombs

IT was in these subterranean chapels that the early Christians sought refuge in times of persecution, and where, from the days of St. Peter until those of St. Marcellus (a period of nearly three hundred years), a whole set of Popes, some for a longer and some for a shorter period of time—St. Caius indeed for eight years—dwelt.

The sanctity of the tombs, and the danger of being lost in the multitudinous ramifications of those dark passages, considerably stood in the way of frequent attempts being made by the enemies of the Christian name to disturb the faithful in their hiding-places. Notwithstanding, at length it happened that the graves of the Christian dead were no guarantee for their safety. St. Emerentia was stoned to death in a grave-chapel; St. Candida was thrown through a *luminare;* and at one time a whole band of Christians were enclosed alive in the sepulchre of the holy martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria.

In the year 258, we know from a letter of St. Cyprian that the Holy Pontiff Sixtus II., with four of his deacons, was martyred in the Catacombs. The pilgrims of the fourth century have covered the plaster of the entrance to this chapel with invocations to St. Sixtus. The venerable Pontiff was thrust into his episcopal chair, a soldier struck off his head, and the chair was stained by his blood.

The precious remains of St. Sixtus were reverently conveyed in the darkness of the night to the adjoining cemetery of St. Callixtus, and deposited in the most honorable position in the crypt where so many of the martyr Popes already lay. The chair, red with his blood, was either now, or at a later period, removed also; and recent explorations have brought to light some fragments of the inscription set up over it by Pope Damasus, of which we give a translation:

"When the sword of persecution pierced the tender heart of our Mother the Church,
I, the Pontiff buried here, was teaching the heavenly precepts.
All at once they came; they seized me seated on my chair—
The soldiers had been sent. Then did the people give their necks to the slaughter.
The old man soon perceived who wish'd to bear away the palm,
And was the first to offer himself and his own life,
That the impatient fury of the heathen might not injure any of his flock.
Christ, who gives the rewards of life, manifests
The merit of the pastor; and He Himself defends the multitude of the flock."

Hebrews xi. 35–38.

"Women received their dead raised to life again; but others were racked, not accepting deliverance that they might find a better resurrection. And others had trials of mockeries and stripes, moreover, also of bonds and prisons; they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being in want, distressed, afflicted; of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth."

after his martyrdom. In this catacomb a number of Popes and holy martyrs were interred, among others the famous Roman virgin St. Cecilia and the glorious companions of her combat. The exact number of Christians laid to rest in the galleries of the Catacombs is not known, but without doubt it is immense. The catacomb of St. Calixtus alone contains many millions. Only a few corridors of this catacomb are shown to visitors, and although this takes up about two hours, not more than a hundredth part can be seen in that time.

Formerly the Catacombs were entered by holes and secret staircases excavated in the gardens or cellars of rich Christians. In the night the earth which had been thrown up by the grave-diggers was conveyed into the adjacent country and sold; and it was also under cover of the night that the remains of the Christians, and especially of those martyrs who had suffered death in confessing the faith, were carried into the Catacombs.

The Pontiff, or priest, hidden in the depths of the catacomb, with one of the brethren to keep watch, held himself in readiness at the time appointed. Accompanied by some of the faithful, the parents or friends of the martyr, he advanced to the entrance of the catacomb; there he received the sacred remains of the soldier of Christ; by the light of lamps and torches he bore them to that place of repose which was already prepared, and there, after having recited, in union with those present, the last prayers for the dead and also the canticles of eternal hope, the holy body was laid in a cavity, hol lowed, like the case of a drawer, out of the walls of the gallery or chamber; a slab of marble, prepared for this purpose, was now placed over the opening of the tomb and sealed with cement, in which a small vial full of the martyr's blood or some instrument of his suffering was usually enclosed; then they hurriedly engraved upon the marble the name of him who slept within its shadows; they added a palm or a crown, the sign of his triumph, and sometimes the age, the beautiful characteristics of this Christian, and some other words or symbols of faith, affection, or regret.

The galleries of the Catacombs are very narrow; scarcely more than two can walk conveniently abreast. Their elevation varies from seven to eight feet in height; the air is damp and heavy. On each side, placed horizontally one above the other, are the tombs of the early Christians. In the greater part we remark a white dust scattered over these venerable relics, produced by the mingling of bones and by the lime which was often used to envelop the bodies

At each step we meet with marbles bearing inscriptions, of which many are of the highest importance as regards religious science.

Scholars and Christian antiquaries who study these inscriptions are thus enabled to prove, by arguments which cannot be gainsayed, that the early Christians had the same belief and the same religious practices as ourselves.

The Catacombs are filled with chapels, almost all of which are full of interest because of the paintings they contain. Although many of these pictures are deteriorated by time, by humidity, by falling earth, and by saltpetre, they are sufficient to establish in the most certain manner many of our Catholic dogmas which Protestants attack as innovations; among others, the veneration of images, the invocation of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints, the remission of sins in the Sacrament of Penance, the solemn celebration of the Mass, the real presence of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist, Purgatory, prayers for the dead, faith in the intercession of the Saints, the pastoral charge of St. Peter and his successors with regard to the flock of the disciples of Jesus Christ, the mission of the Apostles to teach and save souls, etc.

These ancient frescoes upon the walls of the chapels are very imperfect, and bear marks of the eagerness of artists who feared to be surprised by an enemy at any moment, and who worked not in order to charm the eyes, but rather to move the heart to faith and love. The expression of all these pictured faces is one of intense solemnity, with which is even mingled a half-wild or terrified expression. The horrors of persecution, the ever-imminent approach of death, detachment from earth, and the love of Jesus Christ crucified, all may be traced in these portraits on the walls.

We have said that there are many chapels in these subterranean vaults, and the greater part bear witness to that divine worship which our fathers formerly celebrated. We may see the place of the principal altar, beneath which three bodies of the most celebrated martyrs rest side by side. The altar, let into the wall and arched, was four or five feet in depth; the arch was decorated with paintings, usually representing the Good Shepherd carrying His sheep upon His shoulders, or the holy martyrs whose bodies rested beneath the sacred stone. The faithful assisted at the holy sacrifice, and the deacons carried communion to those who, uniting their intention, prayed in the galleries and adjacent chambers, being unable from want of sufficient space to enter the chapel where Mass was being said.

We see in the principal chapels of the Catacombs seats of stone used by the ancient Popes during the solemnity of the Masses; and among others that upon which the Pope St. Stephen was surprised and decapitated by the soldiers of the Emperor Decius, during the terrible persecution raised by that prince in 257. He was celebrating the holy mysteries upon the very place where the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul reposed.

Around these pontifical chairs we see also the bench cut out of the stone where the Presbytery sat—that is to say, the College of Cardinal Priests who assisted the Pontiff in all the necessities of his august ministry.

And in our own days still, in all the Papal chapels, the Sovereign Pontiff is never seen at the foot of the altars without being surrounded by the Sacred College of the Cardinals of the Roman Church, successors of the ancient presbyters.

No words can express the impression left upon the mind by the pilgrimage of the Catacombs. A variety of feelings, which are all most salutary, seem to take possesion of the heart: the nothingness of the things of this world; the wisdom of the Christian life, which esteems only that which endures forever, and counts as worthless all the vanities of the world; the immutable strength of the Church, which has vanquished in such combats, and which to-day, ever the same both in faith and in practice, holds an unrivalled sway by virtue of her stability, her greatness, and her powerful, ever-fruitful life over all ages of the world and each succeeding generation of mankind; happiness in being a Christian like to the heroes whose ashes rest here; shame at resembling them so little in fervor; detachment, contempt of this present life, and strength of faith—such are some few of the thoughts and feelings which rush in upon the soul on a visit to the Catacombs.

On going out, dazzled by the brilliant light of an Italian sun, we regret to leave these grand and solemn witnesses of the past, and yet experience some sensation of relief upon passing out from the dwellings of the dead, to find ourselves once more among the living.

SOUVENIRS OF ROME.

In proportion as time passes by, and we find ourselves still farther and farther from the first ages of the Church, faith grows cold; and it seems as if even the life of Our Lord and of His Apostles becomes

less true, less full of interest, and less powerful to touch our hearts, because of the centuries that lie between.

Less distracted by business and the pleasures of the world, our fathers went to Rome and to Jerusalem to invigorate their faith. There were neither railroads nor steamboats, but they set out on foot, carrying a pilgrim's staff, asking hospitality at the convents and houses that they passed upon their way, sometimes reduced to beg their bread along the road, devoting months or years to accomplish their pilgrimage.

I would propose to you to accompany me in spirit on this journey to Rome, which God has given me the grace to accomplish, and to kneel thus at the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul; to descend into the Catacombs where the bodies of so many martyrs have reposed, and to visit the churches where these glorious relics are now venerated.

The city of Rome is almost as large as Paris, and yet it has only 150,000 inhabitants A great part of it is covered with ruins which attest its ancient power, with churches whose spires and domes arise upon all sides, and with convents and their far-stretching gardens.

Nineteen centuries ago, when Jesus Christ came into the world, and when Paris was only a little fishing-village, Rome was the mistress of the universe. The Romans held possession of Italy, France, Spain, half of Germany, European and Asiatic Turkey, Egypt, Algiers, etc. After each new conquest they raised in their capital a triumphal arch or a temple to the false gods of the vanquished people. Thus Rome became the most beautiful, the most wealthy, and most richly adorned of all the cities of the earth.

To judge by the ruins which remain of this ancient town, the life of the people was passed chiefly at the baths and at the theatres. A single establishment of baths (and each emperor built a new one) occupied the space of an entire neighborhood. A single hall of the hot-baths of Diocletian, restored by Michael Angelo, became the great Church of St. Mary of the Angels. These baths were adorned with columns, statues, mosaics, and were large enough to receive gratuitously all those who came there to pass away their time. The amphitheatres, erected for games and public spectacles, were no less vast; and the Coliseum, whose walls and seats are still partially standing, contained 200,000 seated spectators.

It was to this great city, wholly engrossed in its conquests and its pleasures, that St. Peter came to preach the Gospel. Surely an enterprise truly divine! Picture to yourself a stranger coming from a

distant eastern land, with neither arms nor treasures, announcing a new doctrine in the name of a crucified God, and preaching mortification and charity to cruel and voluptuous men.

The old Church of St. Prudentia still marks the place where St. Peter received hospitality at the house of the senator Prudens, and a simple table is preserved there which served as an altar to the Prince of the Apostles! His preaching soon converted the Romans by thousands, as it had converted the Jews at Jerusalem, and it was visible to all that the hand of God was with him.

At that time another Simon (St. Peter himself had borne the name of Simon before his vocation to the apostleship) excited the curiosity of the Romans by false miracles and magical practices, and had attracted great numbers. Secretly jealous of St. Peter, who had refused to sell to him the gift of miracles, Simon sought from the powers of evil help to work wonders, which he declared to be so many proofs of the falsity of Christianity.

One day he proclaimed that he would be lifted up from the ground in an open public place; judge of the immense throng that gathered together to see such an extraordinary sight. The Emperor Nero came himself with all his suite. St. Peter also came, but with far different thoughts. He knelt down in a corner apart, upon a flagstone in the street, and began to pray to God to confound this impostor and this enemy of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, at the appointed time, Simon the magician rose majestically in the air amid the applause of all the spectators. But the prayers of the Apostle quickly prevailed over the infernal power of the magician, and sud denly he fell, as though struck by lightning, and dashed his head against the earth. The crowd dispersed, bewildered and discontented, and loudly accusing the Christians, whose enemy Simon was, as the cause of this misfortune.

Thus of these two Simons one, by giving himself up to the devil, perished miserably upon the very day when he expected to attain to the height of honor and fortune; the other, by giving himself to God, acquired an immortal glory by his virtues, his humility, and his courageous faith. All must choose between two destinies. Each one among us must be either the servant of God or the slave of the devil.

St. Peter had prayed with so much energy that God was willing to preserve by a new miracle the remembrance of his prayer, and hence there remained, deeply engraven upon the stone where the Apostle had knelt, the impress of his knees. This stone is religiously

preserved in the Church of St. Francoise Romaine, built upon the very spot where this miracle took place. Nevertheless, the pagans, secretly jealous of the virtues of the Christians, accused them of all public misfortunes, and sought for any pretext by which they might let loose their anger against them. Virtue is always detested by those who have not the courage to imitate it.

The Emperor Nero, a true monster of cruelty, and the murderer of his own mother, in order to get rid of these importunate disciples of Jesus Christ, conceived the most odious and cruel project that can be imagined. One evening he set fire to the four quarters of Rome.

From the terraces of his palace, the immense ruins of which are still to be seen upon Mount Palatine, he contemplated with ferocious joy this terrible spectacle. Separated by vast gardens from the scene of the fire, he saw extending at his feet the flames which he himself had kindled, and listened to the groans of the unfortunate people surprised by this catastrophe.

The following day he accused the Christians of his own crime; he gave the order to arrest them all and to deliver them to the vengeance of the laws and the fury of the people. Then were the most frightful sufferings devised; some were thrown to the lions and tigers, others were drowned in boiling oil, others torn to pieces by iron combs, and others, finally, covered with melted pitch and lighted like torches in Nero's gardens.

At the very commencement of this persecution, St. Peter resolved to leave the ungrateful city and to carry the Word of God elsewhere. He took his pilgrim's staff and directed his steps toward one of the gates of Rome, when suddenly Jesus Christ appeared to him coming to meet him and entering the city. "Lord, where goest Thou?" cried the Apostle at the sight of his divine Master. "I am going to be crucified a second time," replied Jesus. And at these words He disappeared, leaving, as the only trace of His appearance, the impress of His sacred feet on a stone upon the road.

St. Peter understood that Jesus Christ was going to suffer in His members, that is to say, in His persecuted Church. He felt that the moment was come when he might make reparation for the weakness he had shown during the Passion of the Saviour, and that he might have the happiness to atone with his blood for the sin for which he had ever bitterly wept, but the remembrance of which no tears had been able to efface. He retraced his steps, and a few days after he was arrested and cast into prison.

The stone which received the impress of the sacred feet of Jesus

is still preserved, and, in order that the memory of this event should not be lost, a little church has been built upon the exact place where our Lord appeared.

Let us now descend into the dungeon where St. Peter is a prisoner; it is a dark, damp, narrow vault, with no opening but a miserable staircase. In a corner, a column marks the place where the Prince of the Apostles was chained. His chains themselves are venerated in a church situated not far from there, which bears their name, St. Peter's Chains. They are formed of heavy iron rings, and consist of two chains which are both attached to an iron collar.

It was thus that the first Pope was fastened in his dungeon, in the midst of a crowd of malefactors who, like the wicked thief, overwhelmed him with blasphemy and raillery. But, nevertheless, he preached to them Jesus crucified, and at the sound of his calm and holy voice, thieves and forgers, jailers and soldiers, were moved, touched, converted. Soon many among them asked to be baptized, and, as there was no water in the prison, the Apostle renewed for them the miracle of Moses. A spring came forth from the ground, which has not ceased to flow for eighteen centuries, and at which all pilgrims freely drink without ever exhausting its waters. Almost all these new children of the Church paid the price of their conversion with their blood, and shared the glory of martyrdom with their father in the faith.

St. Peter remained a long time in prison, but his trial was not long; he was the chief of the Christians—that sufficed. As a Jew he was condemned to be crucified. He was led to the foot of Mount Vatican in Nero's circus. Arrived at the place of his martyrdom, he only asked one favor from his persecutors, and that was to crucify him with his head downward; he did not think himself worthy to die as Jesus Christ had died. It was granted him, and this time, seeking strength and courage from God, he died with heroic resignation and holy joy. Happy he who can value thus the grace of suffering as his Lord and Master suffered, and to whom the crosses that God sends him are only too beautiful for him to bear.

II.

A simple stone with this inscription, "Here Peter was crucified," points out to the pilgrim the place where St. Peter died. It is the very place upon which his cross was erected.

When we have thus followed, as it were, step by step in the foot-

prints of the great Apostle, when we have seen his first altar, kissed his chains, visited his prison and the place of his martyrdom, we feel as if we were much nearer to him, and as if his glorious life were only just completed. And, after all, what difference does it make that these things happened eighteen centuries ago? Should they therefore have less interest for us now? Are we not sons of that Church of which Peter was the first Vicar? Was it not from Rome that the faith was first brought into our country? And even till this day, is it not from the tomb of St. Peter that the words come to us which lead to eternal life?

Let us go, therefore, to this sacred tomb; it is there that all the grandeur of the Apostle is manifested, and to honor him worthily the Church has surpassed in magnitude all that the power of man has ever produced. St. Peter's is the largest, the highest, the most spacious church in the world; by its vast extent it seems to cover the pilgrims of the whole earth, and whatever the number of the faithful it always appears deserted. The walls are adorned with the richest marbles of every variety; the pictures themselves partake of the solidity of the edifice and are secure from the ravages of time, for they are composed of mosaics, that is to say, of stones of different colors joined and shaped with infinite art. Many churches of Rome are adorned with mosaics of the time of Constantine, that is to say, more than fourteen centuries ago, and they have not the less preserved their brilliancy.

On the right, within the church, is the famous statue of St. Peter, one of the feet of which is worn by the kisses of the pilgrims. At the bottom of the church, enchased with bronze, is the ancient seat where the holy Apostle sat to preach the Gospel. Lastly, in the centre of the edifice, beneath the gigantic cupola, each one comes to kneel at his very tomb. Twelve dozen lamps, which burn night and day, surround this sacred monument, and are a symbol of the undying glory of the first Head of the Church.

He died so long ago, say those who know nothing of the Church of God; but, instead of being a reason for indifference or forgetfulness, the eighteen centuries which have elapsed since the martyrdom of St. Peter furnish one of the most brilliant proofs of Catholic truth. While the palaces of emperors, the temples of false gods, the amphitheatres, and baths have turned to dust, the tomb of the crucified Apostle has endured throughout the ages. And to this very day the magnificent cupola beneath which he reposes rises majestically above the forgotten tombs of his persecutors.

The remembrance of St. Paul and of his stay at Rome is as vivid as that of St. Peter. Under the Church of Santa Maria *in via lata*, in the centre of the city, is a subterranean vault composed of three little rooms. It was formerly a ground floor, but the ruins and the débris which accumulate everywhere upon the Roman soil have gradually closed up the windows, and the room can only be entered by a staircase of twenty steps. It was there that St. Paul lived for three years, there that he wrote many of his epistles to the faithful of Greece and of the East. St. Luke was with him, and it was there that he composed the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

St. Paul gloried in being in chains for Jesus Christ. He was closely watched by many soldiers; and if he enjoyed a little more liberty than other Christians he only owed it to his title of a Roman citizen. But soon the persecution became fiercer, and he was sent to rejoin St. Peter in the Mamertine prison, in that frightful dungeon deprived of air and light, where the fisherman of Galilee was baptizing the newly converted in a miraculous fountain. Judged at the same time, they were condemned to perish on the same day, only, instead of being crucified, St. Paul, as a Roman citizen, was sentenced to be beheaded. They quitted their prison to walk together to the place of suffering, and, after having conversed some time on the reward which awaited them, they were separated by their executioners, and said farewell till they should meet again, a few hours afterward, in heaven. The place where they embraced for the last time has been marked by the erection of a church, upon the pediment of which the last words that they spoke to each other are engraved. Having arrived without the town, at the place of his suffering, St. Paul knelt calmly down, and heard without trembling the stroke of the sword which was to terminate his life His head, in falling, rebounded as though urged by some extraordinary force, and struck the ground in three places, from which issued three fountains, a figure of those abundant graces of which he should be the source even after his death. These fountains are now enclosed within a church, where the stone upon which the Apostle placed his head is also venerated. Not far from there, and also without the town, stands the magnificent Church of St. Paul, upon the spot where he was buried. This venerable monument, which dates from the fourth century, and which was almost entirely destroyed by fire thirty years ago, rises to-day from its ruins richer and more beautiful than ever. Even infidels and schismatics have desired to render homage to the Apostle of all nations: and the great altar of mala

chite, given by the Emperor of Russia, is placed between four columns of alabaster sent by the Pasha of Egypt. All round the church the portraits of the Popes are represented in a long series of medallions in mosaic. Each one of these portraits is a link in the long, uninterrupted chain which unites us to the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Let us glory in belonging to that ever living and immutable Church, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

ST. PETER'S.

WHAT Rome is to the world, St. Peter's is to Rome.

Rome is the holy city, the centre of the Catholic faith, the citadel of truth, the very sanctuary of the Catholic religion. And of all the temples that are enclosed within this one vast temple, St. Peter's is the chief; it is the central point of religious faith in Rome, and her most magnificent crown. Every one can understand why. Within these sacred walls repose the relics of the Prince of the Apostles, the first Bishop of Rome, the first of the long line of Pontiffs, the first Vicar of Jesus Christ. And close by, in an immense palace near to the church, the Pontiff lives,—the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of the Son of God, and Sovereign Pastor of all the Christians upon the face of the whole earth.

After having preached Christianity in Rome for twenty-five years, St. Peter, with the Apostle St. Paul, was arrested by the command of Nero, during the first persecution which that cruel Emperor waged against the Christians.

The sumptuous gardens and the vast circus which Nero had consecrated to the public games and races became the theatre of the first victories of Christianity. These heroes, of a type hitherto unknown, became in death triumphant.

The celebrated colonnade of St. Peter now occupies the place where the ancient circus stood. It is also related that an Emperor of Germany, having come to Rome to visit the Pope, and asking him for some relics of the Prince of the Apostles, the Pontiff replied: "To touch these sacred bones is what I may not, dare not do." Then, stooping down and presenting to the Prince a handful of dust which he had just gathered in his hand, he added: "But if you wish for relics they are here, for the earth beneath our feet has been watered by the blood of the first martyrs of Jesus Christ."

Nero let loose his fury against the Christians by causing a multitude to perish (some being killed by the sword, others covered with

the skins of beasts and devoured by furious dogs, others covered with brimstone and pitch, fastened to stakes, and burned in the evening to give pleasure to their persecutors), and he next desired to strike the shepherd now that he had slaughtered so many of the flock.

For nine months St. Peter and St. Paul had been confined within the terrible dungeons of the Mamertine prison. They were both condemned to death, and on the 29th of June, in the year 66 of the Christian era, St. Paul was beheaded at a place which the piety of the faithful still venerate upon the Ostian Way. And St. Peter, his father and friend, after having given him the kiss of farewell, at a spot of which tradition has also preserved the touching remembrance, was led to Nero's garden to be crucified.

The Christians elected St. Linus as his successor, and thus commenced the glorious series of Popes which will never end until the end of the world.

The body of St. Peter was taken from the spot by the faithful of Rome; they laid it in a neighboring catacomb hollowed out in the sides of Mount Vatican.

There, still more than at the tomb of St. Paul, the Christians met for prayer, for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and to participate in the mysteries of the Holy Eucharist.

In proportion as the faith spread the richness of the sacred tomb increased. Providence permitted that it should never be violated by the pagans, and that all Christian generations should enjoy the blessing of this inestimable treasure. At the peace of the Church, about the year 320, Constantine the Great desired to honor the memory of the Prince of the Apostles, and raised, at his own expense, a magnificent church over his tomb. He had a part of Mount Vatican cut away, not daring to disturb the tomb of St. Peter. He surrounded the chest which contained his bones with a shrine of porphyry, and upon the lid he placed a cross of gold, which remains until this day, with the following inscription: "To St. Peter, Constantine Emperor, and Helena Empress."—"*Divo Petro, Constantinus Augustus, et Helena Augusta.*"

Nothing but the pavement of this first church still exists. Three hundred and sixty years ago its very antiquity, which rendered it so venerable, caused a complete ruin to be feared. It was decided to rebuild it, and the Pope then raised over the tomb of the Apostle (which was not touched) the immense and marvellous church which the pilgrims of the whole world visit at this day

Ten thousand bodies of saints and martyrs rest in the crypts of St Peter's. And in the ranks of this legion, what names! what memories! There are the first fifteen Popes, all martyrs. There is St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nazianzum, St. Gregory the Great, St. Leo the Great, St. Leo II., St. Leo III., St. Leo IX.; there is St. Petronilla, the disciple of St. Peter; St. Processus and St. Martinian, the two commanders of the cohort which guarded the Apostle in the Mamertine prison, and who now repose with their former captive, afterward become their father in the faith, in the first temple in the world. In front, on the other side of the tomb, are the Apostles St. Simon and St. Jude, companions of St. Peter, whom death itself has not divided from their former Head.

It is these tombs that constitute to the Christian heart the true beauty of St. Peter's. Tourists and travellers pass them by and see only the marbles, the gold, the mosaics, and the wonders of the architecture. They regard the stones, while we regard the saints. They admire the fleeting materials and treasures of earth; we lift our hearts on high, and with the enlightened eyes of the soul see glimpses of the glory which only the light of God can reveal.

What deep and pure emotions must fill the heart of the true Catholic when, approaching this hallowed tomb, before which a hundred and forty lamps burn night and day, he bends his head down to the stone which covers the ashes of the first Vicar of his God! How great a privilege to be able to recite on such a spot the ancient symbol of the one true faith, the Credo, composed by the holy Apostles, and so often recited by the same St. Peter, who during the days of his apostolate preached and disseminated it throughout the world.

When the pilgrim has ended his prayer and raises his eyes, he suddenly perceives above the tomb of St. Peter and as though forming the girdle of the gigantic cupola, the sentence which fell from the lips of the Son of God, written upon gold in immense letters of mosaic: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven"—"*Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam, et tibi dabo claves regni cœlorum.*"

Then he feels proud of his holy faith, and sees, perhaps for the first time clearly, the utter insignificance of the innumerable religious sects which, scattered here and there, are reaping in endless change and ceaseless discord the inevitable fruits of abandoning the pastoral See of Peter, and separating themselves from the true fold of Jesus Christ.

The four pillars which sustain the cupola are of such proportions that an architect has been able, by an ingenious thought, to construct in another part of Rome a vast chapel and a small monastery in the same space of ground which only one of these pillars occupies. In each of them precious relics are enclosed. In one the body of St. Veronica rests, and the cloth with which she wiped the face of Our Lord as He ascended to Mount Calvary. In another is venerated the entire body of St. Longinus, a Roman soldier who, after the Saviour's death, pierced His Sacred Heart with a lance, and a fragment of this lance is preserved in a shrine which is opened on Good Friday, and which is framed in two magnificent columns from the temple of Jerusalem. In the third pillar is preserved a noted relic of the true cross, and in the fourth the head of St. Andrew, the eldest brother of St. Peter.

But what can be said of the feelings of faith and of gratitude which fill the heart of the Christian when, upon the day of grand pontifical ceremonies, he sees the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, the depositary of his power, the heir of his promises, offer to God, over the body of the Apostle, the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, which St. Peter himself celebrated in the cenaculum upon the Day of Pentecost, and which, for eighteen centuries, all Pontiffs and priests have offered in their turn. It seems as if the most divine spectacle that it has been given to man to contemplate upon earth is the Sacred Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ, veiled beneath the Holy Eucharist, and offered to the adoration of the faithful by the hands of the Sovereign Pontiff over the altar of St. Peter. How sad it is that there should be any who could witness this great religious act and yet be incapable of comprehending all its beauty and its glory.

THE DAILY LIFE OF THE POPE.

As a rule, the higher the dignity to which a man is raised the more weighty and difficult are the duties which his position involves. I know that this is not generally believed or understood, but it is none the less true. Life is often a weary burden to those of high estate, and there is less liberty in the palaces of princes than in the humble dwellings of the poor.

The greatest dignitary in the world is undoubtedly the Pope, the supreme head of religion upon earth, the High Priest of God, the bishop and pastor of all the faithful, the spiritual father of monarchs as well as of their subjects. There is also no man in the world

who leads a more trying, arduous, difficult, and laborious life. From the morning till the evening, from the first day of the year till the last, he is, to the very letter, the Servant of the servants of God, as the Sovereign Pontiffs so justly entitle themselves in the Papal bulls and decrees.

Let us consider in what manner the Pope passes the day.

Our Holy Father lives at Rome, in an immense palace called the Vatican, adjoining the Church of St. Peter's. The vast halls of the Vatican are adorned with grandeur and simplicity; the walls are uniformly covered with red hangings, and with the exception of the pontifical throne the only seats are wooden stools. After a long suite of rooms occupied by the servants and guards, according to their rank, then by the prelates composing the Papal household, we reach the special apartments of His Holiness.

These rooms are small and still more simple than the others. And first comes the study of the Holy Father. It is there that he gives, during the day, his numerous audiences, of which we shall speak presently. The Pope is seated in an armchair of crimson velvet; before him is a large square table covered with red silk, similar to the hangings on the walls, and above the chair there is a canopy of the same color, the insignia of royal and pontifical majesty. Seats for the cardinals and princes, and two or three wooden seats, constitute the furniture of this apartment. This first room communicates with a second of the same size, and exactly similar, excepting that at the end there is a bed hung with crimson silk. This is the Pope's bed-chamber. Then comes a third room furnished in the same manner; this is the dining-room. The Holy Father has every meal alone, on a table covered with red silk like that in the study. Lastly comes the library, which is a large and beautiful room with four or five windows, and where the Pope is accustomed to hold councils with his ministers.

The Pope is always dressed in white. He wears on his head a small cap of white silk; his cassock is of white cloth during the winter, and of thin white woollen or white silk during the summer. His wide band is also of white silk, with gold tassels. His shoes, or slippers, are red, with a gold cross embroidered on the instep. It is this cross which is kissed by every one who approaches the sacred person of the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

When he leaves his apartments the Pope wears over his cassock a rochet of lace, a scarlet mantle trimmed with white fur, and, lastly, a stole embroidered in gold. He covers his head with a large red

silk hat a little raised on each side, and trimmed, with a gold tassel. The former custom of the Pontifical Court did not permit him to go out in the streets of Rome excepting in a carriage; beyond the gates of the city, he often took long walks on foot, stopping willingly to speak to the poor and to children, and giving his holy benediction to those whom he met.* All who meet the Pope uncover their heads and kneel down as a mark of the reverence due to his character of Supreme Pontiff. The Holy Father rises early. After his prayers he goes into his chapel to celebrate the Holy Mass. This chapel is small, and adjoining the Pope's apartment. The Blessed Sacrament is always preserved there, and the Holy Father, in his devotion to the Divine Eucharist, attends himself to the two lamps which burn perpetually before the tabernacle. His Holiness says Mass, slowly and with deep devotion; his august face is often bathed with tears while he holds in his sacred hands the hidden God of whom he is the Vicar.

Usually he says Mass at half-past seven, and assists, as an act of thanksgiving, at a second Mass celebrated by one of his chaplains. Afterward he recites a part of the breviary on his knees with one of the prelates of his household, and then returns to his apartments. The Pope's breakfast consists simply of a cup of black coffee. The sobriety of the Italians is well known, and this is the first repast of almost all Romans. Until about ten o'clock the Holy Father works every day with his first minister, who is a Cardinal, and is called the Secretary of State.

At ten o'clock commence the audiences, a laborious task, which would be trying and wearisome if the most important questions and the gravest interests of religion and society were not there discussed. Cardinals, bishops, princes, ambassadors, missionaries, priests, and great numbers of the faithful come from all parts of the world to lay down at the feet of the Head of the Church their homage, their requests, and their necessities. The Pope remains seated during these audiences. All kneel in his presence, or stand with his permission. Cardinals and princes have the privilege of sitting down. On entering the Pope's study three genuflexions are made; the first at the threshold, the second half way, and the third at the Pope's feet. Then his foot or his hand is kissed, and the audience commences. As soon as it is ended, the Holy Father rings a bell, and some one else is announced and immediately introduced by one of

* Owing to the Italian spoliation of the temporal power, the Pope never leaves the Vatican grounds.

the resident prelates. Only men are admitted in this manner into the apartments of the Pope; this is an invariable rule. Ladies are received for an audience once or twice a week, in a large hall forming part of the public museums of the Vatican.

The audiences of the morning usually last more than four hours. When they are ended, at about half-past two, the Pope passes into his dining-room and takes a frugal repast. Then he recites, on his knees, the continuation of his breviary, and, after a few minutes' repose, goes out to take a little exercise. When it is bad weather the Holy Father contents himself with walking for a little time up and down the library or in one of the covered galleries of the Vatican. At the decline of day, indicated in Italy by the sound of the Angelus, and for this reason called the *Ave Maria*, the Pope returns to the Vatican, recites with his suite the Angelical Salutation, adding the *De Profundis* for all the faithful in the whole world who have died during the course of the day. Then the audiences recommence. Different papers are also submitted to the Pope for his signature; the decrees of the different Roman congregations which preside over the religious affairs of the whole Catholic world are submitted for his sovereign approbation and final decision. These audiences last until ten or eleven in the evening, after which the Holy Father takes a light collation, composed of fruits or vegetables; he then terminates the recitation of his breviary and goes to take some hours of that repose which he has so devoutly and laboriously earned.

Such, with rare exceptions, is the daily life of the Pope, and such a life, notwithstanding the honors with which it is surrounded, and even because of these honors, is a continual subjection, an hourly self-renunciation; also when the Sovereign Pontiff enters into the designs of God, as is so perfectly done by our Holy Father the present Pope, his life is complete in the sight of God, and merits more than any other life the great and blessed recompense promised to the faithful servant.

THE PRETENDED SCANDALS OF ROME.

Rome is the very centre and citadel of the Catholic faith, and therefore all the corruptions and abuses which have gradually crept into Catholicism since the first foundation of Christianity must of necessity be peculiarly rampant at Rome. Such is without exaggeration the opinion of those who know nothing of our holy faith,

viz., of the many who have read no Catholic books, who fail to understand our Catholic services, and misapprehend all Catholic doctrines, yet at the same time do not hesitate to form and express their unenlightened opinions based entirely on the ignorant assertions of Protestant writers, or on the foolish and mistaken ideas to which years of enmity and prejudice have given rise. To all these calumnies, built one upon another, I will only oppose one single fact, incontestable to those who are really acquainted with Rome: and that is that at Rome, more than in any other city of the world, Protestants become Catholics. And these Protestants, mark well, are the best, the holiest, and the most learned within the ranks of Protestantism. They are Anglican clergymen, members of the University of Oxford, known throughout England as sincere, intellectual, honorable men; German doctors, whose profound, intricate studies are regarded with admiration by Catholics themselves; deep and earnest thinkers whose good faith is beyond suspicion; members of the different Protestant sects of America, and many others of the same type. Now, I ask, if the very contact with Rome has power to work within such minds as these the most important and difficult change which can take place in the life of a man, how is it possible to explain this phenomenon without recognizing that the very atmosphere of Rome, far from giving scandal, is, on the contrary, so redolent with Christian truth and Christian holiness that it penetrates the inmost recesses of the heart, sheds light where there was darkness, and fills the soul with God?

There is not a month, there is not a week in which Rome does not witness some abjuration of Protestantism. Some years ago an American minister travelled across the Atlantic expressly to evangelize Rome. The occasion was the best he could have chosen; Pius IX. had just defined the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and Rome was in the full rush of idolatry of Mariolatry! Christ was forgotten, but the pure Gospel was now about to shine in the midst of darkness! The honest minister chose, without more delay, a convenient site to build a church where he could preach Christianity to the Romans. The temple rose—before it was finished the American became a Catholic, and the temple, completed, became a charming little chapel dedicated to the Immaculate Virgin.

A very similar event happened soon after in the conversion of the Anglican clergyman Wilberforce, known to be one of the most brilliant and talented Englishmen of his time. He came to Rome—Protestant, and very Protestant—preached there against papistry,

and a few weeks afterward humbly abjured all heresy in the church of the Jesuit Fathers.

I have myself known many persons of high rank and deep learning for whom a visit to Rome has procured this same grace—among others, a young clergyman from Oxford, who came expressly to attack the errors of Romanism. "*Tel fut pris, qui croyait prendre.*" This truly good and earnest young minister was astonished to find among the Roman clergy of all grades, among cardinals and prelates, as well as poor religious, virtues as real and attractive as they were modest and unobtrusive; he discovered a great number of ecclesiastics of deep learning and intact morals all united by ties of perfect harmony. With many of these he had long conversations on the faith they professed, and in the end became a Catholic and finally a priest. I could cite a thousand similar facts, all of which answer, better than any arguments, the calumnious reports to which impiety, heresy, and levity give rise concerning the pontifical city. I certainly do not pretend that everything is perfect at Rome, that all the ecclesiastics and religious there are saints; it is not well to expect too much, and there, as everywhere, we must make allowance for human weakness. But what I emphatically assert, and of which I am most firmly persuaded, judging by a personal experience of four consecutive years, is that Rome is an edifying city where God is well served, where saintly lives are led, and where the good predominates incalculably over the bad. What I affirm is, that the Roman clergy are, as a body, a most exemplary clergy, as remarkable for their piety and zeal as for their poverty and modesty.

What I affirm and what I assert, judging by my own experience, is that it is impossible to find greater kindness, consideration, and courtesy than among the cardinals and prelates of Rome. Nothing could be more edifying than to penetrate into the private life of the greater number of them; they give a great part of their time to prayer, they work most indefatigably and conscientiously, and their daily sobriety is a real and austere mortification; the outward pomp which etiquette requires of them is but the covering of simple unostentatious lives, and if toward the end of the day they may be seen walking out like other people and taking a little rest and recreation, can we deny that they have earned it well?

They are accused of mixing in society. Besides the fact that many of them consecrate all their evenings to work, it must be said in defence of the rest, that Rome being before all things an ecclesiastical city, both with regard to its temporal as well as its spiritual

ascendancy, its cardinals and prelates occupy a rank which devolves upon them certain indispensable duties to society. It must also be said that their manner when in society is irreproachable, and that, even in the world, they are distinctly ecclesiastics. Cardinals are the princes of the Church and of Rome. Would to God that all great lords resembled them! I should like to be able to relate a number of instances which would reveal their real characters, and prove all that I have been saying, but a whole book might well be written about Rome.

The little that I have said will, I hope, suffice to show that the capital of the Catholic world has been greatly calumniated; men attribute to the whole body of the clergy the isolated faults of some few of its members, and blame the Church and the Catholic religion for that which is only the sad result of human infirmity; they judge in haste, and condemn with passion; and the world in general repeats all that it hears, and receives as a proved incontestible fact that which is only a mass of falsehoods, a foolish fable, willingly credited and widely disseminated by that unreliable scandal-loving censor which we call "public opinion."

TWO JUBILEES.

At the opening of the Jubilee of the year 1775, celebrated in the city of Osimo (near Loretto in Italy), a grand procession was organized, in which all the children of the colleges and seminaries took part. The rich silver candlesticks which accompanied the cross were carried by two young clerics of the seminary, about fifteen years old; the one named Della Genga, the other Castiglione, both of noble and illustrious families.

From some cause or another these two acolytes began to quarrel, and carried away by anger went on from words to blows, in a manner that was anything but edifying, especially before so large an assembly. The two champions, having no arms, attacked each other with their candlesticks, and, in spite of the promptitude with which they were separated, poor Della Genga received a blow which alone would have prevented him from continuing the combat.

Fifty years after, at the Jubilee of 1825, Della Genga, become Pope under the ever-revered and celebrated name of Leo XII., descended from the Vatican surrounded by all the Roman court to preside at the opening of the Jubilee by the ancient ceremony of the demolition of the Holy Gate. The Pope, receiving from the hands

of the Cardinal Grand Penitentiary a silver hammer, strikes the first blow on the wall, which is then pulled down, as has been already explained, and thus gives the signal for the opening of the holy year.

Castiglione, having become a Bishop and a Cardinal, was promoted to the office of Grand Penitentiary of the Roman Church; the honor of presenting the silver hammer of the Jubilee to the Pope therefore came to him of right. On returning it to him, Leo XII. said in a low voice with a mischievous smile:

"*Monsignore il Cardinale*, it is just fifty years ago to-day that, under similar circumstances, you offered me another silver instrument in a somewhat less gracious manner."

"I remember, Holy Father," replied the Cardinal a little disconcerted, "and I trust your Holiness pardoned me long ago."

Four years later, after a reign, alas! too short, Leo XII. died, and Cardinal Castiglione succeeded him under the name of Pius VIII.

How greatly astonished would have been the witnesses of the procession and stormy encounter of 1775 could they have foreseen the future!

Bad beginnings may make good endings, and we should never despair of anything.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

ALL the nations of the earth have not received from heaven the inestimable gift of the one true Faith.

All have not, like the poorest villagers in a Catholic country, a priest to receive and baptize their new-born children, to teach them to know God and to know themselves—a kind and sympathizing pastor to comfort them in trouble and sickness, to help and console them at the terrible moment of death, and to pray for them when they are no more. Out of the immense number of men living on the earth, many hundreds of millions are still deprived of these the greatest of all benefits.

Therefore, in pagan countries the most terrible crimes dishonor humanity, so terrible that we are almost tempted to ask if those who act thus can be men and not rather monsters in human form. Thus in China, a country so celebrated for its riches, its arts, its civilization, hundreds of thousands of children are destroyed every year by the most horrible and unnatural means. In Africa, in Oceanica, in Central America, there are tribes among whom cannibalism is the practice, and who follow up each conquest by feasting on their van-

quished enemy. Such is the extent of degradation among these miserable people that when the father is old and infirm, the son massacres and eats him without even the victim himself feeling any surprise. In India, the cradle of civilization, upon the death of certain chiefs, they immolate and burn their wives and their slaves, sometimes to the number of many hundreds. Lastly, everywhere where the Gospel is not preached and practised; everywhere where Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Restorer of fallen humanity, is not adored, there are the most frightful disorders, the most foolish superstitions, subjection of women, oppression of the poor, the most revolting immorality, and very often unmingled wretchedness.

Nevertheless, Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men. In His divine love He makes no distinction between the European and the Asiatic, between the African Negro and the American Indian. He desires to save them all, to lead them all to the possession of eternal life, and for this end He has put into the hearts of His servants, from the commencement of Christianity, the desire to proclaim His holy name throughout the world. "Go," He said to them when ascending into heaven, "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," and from that very moment the Propagation of the Faith began. Every one knows the wonderful labors of the Apostles; and here we might well speak of those among the saints who, for eighteen centuries, have followed in their steps; but it will suffice to say that what was done by St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Thomas, and all the Apostles, the Church still does through her missionaries, whom she sends all over the earth to preach the Gospel to every creature.

Therefore, year by year, from the shores of France, of England, of Italy, of Belgium, intrepid missionary priests go forth into all known lands, and even into those which are still unexplored, to evangelize the nations.

Many of these fall victims upon their first arrival to hunger, cholera, and pestilence; others become the object of the most cruel persecutions. They are thrown into prison, beaten with rods, torn with pincers, strangled, burned, cut in pieces; even those who escape such tortures as these are subject to the greatest misery, and are more destitute than the very poorest of the poor in Europe. And, nevertheless, year after year there are never wanting rich and talented men who are willing to renounce a brilliant and successful career in their own country, to give up fortune and family and friends, and to go forth to fill the voids which epidemics and the

hands of savage persecutors have made; for, before all, they desire to save their brethren who groan in misery and sin, and do not know the one true God!

And this is the Propagation of the Faith.

It is a generous work; for, while the missionaries only ask the faithful for a small contribution every week, and one Ave Maria every day, they are themselves prodigal of their life and their blood. It was France that gave, thirty years ago, the signal for that association which now covers the whole world. It is a work which is supremely acceptable to God, because it is the continuation of the work of Jesus Christ upon earth. There is, therefore, no Christian who should not belong to this association, especially as the Sovereign Pontiff has rendered it accessible to the poorest, by allowing those to be inscribed in it who, though only able to give the smallest possible alms, should make some little offering according as their conscience and their means permit.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY INFANCY.

SOME years ago a great undertaking was conceived by a French Bishop, Mgr. de Forbin-Janson.

Deeply grieved by the thought of the multitude of children who in idolatrous countries perish through infanticide, he resolved to snatch them from the cruel death which awaited them, to open heaven, by baptism, to the greatest number, and to make the others, by a Christian education, the instruments of the propagation of the Gospel in their own country.

This was a generous thought, and worthy of the good Bishop who resolved to put it into execution.

There are, in fact, countries unenlightened by that Gospel of peace and love which shows to us Jesus caressing and blessing little children; and where there exists, on the contrary, a profound contempt for childhood; there little children are exposed and sold like some vile merchandise, and are killed if they are a trouble and inconvenience—and in this respect China is lamentably conspicuous for its barbarity. In this vast country, where the cruelty of barbarism is united to the immorality of an effete civilization, custom gives the head of the family the right to murder his new-born child, and the poor, innumerable in this empire, take advantage of this terrible right in order to free themselves from the inconvenience of a numerous family.

THE HOLY CHILDHOOD OF JESUS.

The Holy Childhood

PRAYER

I ADORE Thee, Incarnate Word, true Son of God from all eternity, and the true son of the Virgin Mary in the fulness of time! Adoring Thy divine person, and the humanity which is united to it, I feel moved, moreover, to venerate the poor crib which welcomed Thee, an infant, and was the first throne of Thy love. Would that I could prostrate myself before it with the simplicity of the shepherds, with the faith of Joseph, with the love of Mary! Would that I could bend in adoration of so precious a memorial of our salvation, with the spirit of mortification, of poverty, of humility, with which Thou, the Lord of heaven and earth, didst choose a manger to receive and shelter Thy trembling limbs! Do Thou, O Lord! who, while yet a babe, didst deign to rest in this crib, vouchsafe also to pour into my heart a little of the joy incited in those who beheld thy lovely childhood, and the wonders which accompanied Thy birth; through which I beseech Thee to give to the whole world peace and good will, and, in the name of all mankind, to render all thanksgiving and glory to the Father and to the Holy Ghost, who, with Thee, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. Amen.

To increase in the hearts of the faithful reverence and devotion for the crib of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which is kept with utmost veneration in the patriarchal basilica of St. Mary Major, His Holiness, Pope Pius IX., by a brief, October 1st, 1861, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this prayer in the basilica of St. Mary Major:

AN INDULGENCE OF TWO HUNDRED DAYS, once a day.

To those who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say it anywhere, he granted, in like manner:

AN INDULGENCE OF ONE HUNDRED DAYS, once a day.—*Raccolta, pp. 75–77.*

HYMN

Sleep, sleep, Babe Divine!
Shadows find no resting-place
On thy pure, sweet baby face;
Angel faces bend o'er thine.

Rest, rest, Holy Child!
Soon enough will life begin
All the weary war with sin,
Sorrow for the sin-defiled

Dream, dream, Saviour dear!
Dream thou of thy Father's home,
For the cruel cross will come
When thy Father seems not near.

Peace, peace, weary men!
Yonder in that lowly stall
Lies our Saviour and our all;
Look and love, and trust again.

The following is the testimony of an English writer upon this subjcet:

"There the wise women," he says, "stifle the children in a basin of hot water, and are paid for this execution. There they throw them into the river after having bound to their backs an empty gourd so that they should float a long time before expiring; the screams they utter then would make human nature shudder in any other land; but there they are accustomed to hear them and nobody shudders. The third method of destroying them is to expose them in the streets, especially in Pekin, where carts pass every morning and collect these children thus exposed during the night and cast them into a grave, where they are left without being covered with earth, in the hope that the Mahometans may come and take some of them out. But very often, before these carts arrive, the dogs, and especially the pigs which fill the streets of the cities of China, eat the children alive. In the city of Pekin alone we are assured that in three years 9,702 children were thus cast upon the highway, and this without counting those who had been trampled to death by horses or mules, nor those devoured by dogs, nor those stifled at their birth, nor those carried away by the Mahometans, nor those cast into the water, calculated by different writers to amount to the number of twelve thousand every year for the city of Pekin alone."

These facts are confirmed by the recent witness of our missionaries.

"Hundreds of thousands, they say, are thus destroyed. The Chinese Government puts no obstacle to this terrible custom. All our missionaries are occupied in receiving these poor little creatures. They bring them to them often for six shillings, three shillings, and even for nothing, saying that if they do not accept them they will have to die."

Who would not be touched by such sad accounts as these? Every one who hears them must feel deep compassion for these poor children, and must be anxious to save them by any possible means. It was this thought that filled the mind of the venerable Bishop of Nancy; this is the work of the Holy Infancy.

In all these idolatrous countries, the most populous of Asia—China, Siam, Cochin-China, and Tonquin—there, where money is scarce, and a man can live upon about a penny or twopence a day, nothing but money is required, and often very little money, to save a great number of children; since, according to the calculation of the missionaries, each one of the associates, by the small contribution of

sixpence a year, can save a child. Could any one refuse so small a sum for such an object? The organization of the work is almost the same as that of the Propagation of the Faith. The associates are divided into a series of twelve members, to honor the twelve years of the Divine Childhood of Our Lord. The subscription for each member is a halfpenny a month (sixpence a year). Each member recites every day (or if he is too young somebody may recite for him): 1st, One Ave Maria; 2d, the following invocation: "Holy Virgin Mary, pray for us and for the poor little heathen children." And as a spiritual bond between these youthful benefactors and those whom the work endeavors to save, the baptismal names given to the heathen children are chosen as much as possible from the names of their young protectors. Lastly, the subscribers undertake to enrol themselves, as soon as they are older, in the work of the Propagation of the Faith, which every year sends such intrepid missionaries into all heathen lands.

People sometimes say: "Why should we trouble about the little Chinese? Have we no abandoned and destitute children at home for whom we ought, first of all, to provide?" The answer to this question is a very simple one. Yes, doubtless, before we go many thousands of miles to save the child who is forsaken, let us take to our hearts the little one lying without our door. This is the first duty; this is the truest instinct. But when this duty is fulfilled—and thanks be to God! in Christian countries home missions are never wanting for charitable aid—let us remember that the hundreds of thousands of children who perish every year in these idolatrous lands are our brethren, and have souls like ours; and let us seek to save them. And here we would gladly plead this cause in such words as were spoken by St. Vincent de Paul, when he determined by his eloquence the foundation of the first establishment for forsaken children.

"Behold them, yes, behold them, these poor little children of whom we ask you to become the mothers! See them, in spite of the distance, stretching their little suppliant hands toward you, asking you, not only for life on earth, but more than all for baptism. . . . They will die if you abandon them, and will be deprived forever of the sight of God. . . . They will die by hundreds of thousands, stifled, drowned, crushed, devoured alive by dogs and swine! . . . But if you adopt them, they will survive, and will be living monuments of your charity, growing as your children grow, and never ceasing to draw down upon them and upon you fresh graces by their prayers; or even, dying still, and doubtless in great numbers, but

covered with the Precious Blood and the merits of Jesus Christ, Heaven itself will gather for you and for your children this rich harvest of little angels. They will watch over you, over all that is dearest to you, returning to mingle in your greatest feast days, in the festivals of your children; and at life's last day they will encourage you, and will strengthen you, and will come at last to introduce you into your one true home, and there, there, where perfect happiness extinguishes all desires, your own will be increased by the felicity which you will see them eternally enjoy."

THE CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION OF ST. FRANCIS OF SALES.

Among the general works devoted to the sacred interests of the Church, there are certainly few which are more urgent than the Association of St. Frances of Sales, founded in 1857, by the express desire of our Holy Father Pope Pius IX., and called by him "The Propagation of the Faith Within."

Its object is to excite, in the Christian countries of Europe, the zeal of Catholics, and to unite them to their pastors in a holy league of prayer and alms, in order to provide efficacious means to preserve, maintain, and defend the faith of the children of the Church.

In countries of mixed creeds, where the Protestant propaganda is supported by foreign resources, the object of the association is to counteract all influences hostile to the one true Faith by diffusing Catholic books, by helping the parish priest to have missions given, and by supporting and extending Catholic schools and orphanages.

In dioceses where there is no heretical propaganda, the object of the association is to sustain and encourage the parish priest in a still more painful struggle—the struggle against religious indifference and forgetfulness of God. It tries to form around them a nucleus of fervent Christians, whose good example may influence others; and there also, in order to dissipate ignorance and prejudice, to arouse from apathy, to reanimate faith, and to lead the erring back to the sacraments, it aids the priest to found Christian schools, to invite missionaries to distribute good and simple books, to maintain or even to establish in his little church frequent religious services; in a word, to preserve and to reanimate the spirit of religion around him.

Lastly, in dioceses where, thanks to Heaven, the Faith is still living and the Church is honored, the work of St. Francis of Sales asks

from priests and faithful Catholics alms for their less happy brethren; she asks them to come to the aid of those who are exposed to the danger of losing the Faith, and to do for populations at home, whose salvation should be most dear to them, that which they do so generously to propagate the same Faith in heathen countries, and to save the poor little children of China and India. What could be more natural and at the same time more Catholic than this association?

This work, which may be summed up in two words, Preservation and Defence of the Faith, has rapidly developed and is visibly blessed by God. It recommends itself by powerful claims to the sympathy and the support of priests and of all good Catholics, both rich and poor.

THE LITTLE SAVOYARDS.

THERE are about three hundred poor little chimney-sweeps, from the age of seven or eight up to about fourteen or fifteen years old, who come from the mountains of Auvergne or of Savoy to gain their living at Paris. Of all the inhabitants of the great city there are perhaps none so destitute and suffering as they, and yet experience shows us every day that they are neither the most wicked nor the most vicious. Beneath the blackness which covers both face and body there are often innocent little souls, childlike and full of candor. Some young Christian people have been touched by the utter destitution to which they see these poor little chimney-sweeps reduced, and without any other resources than their own charity they have set to work to release them from the twofold misery of soul and body.

Their success has gone beyond their hopes. They have seen coming to them from all parts these poor children who, in their dirt and wretchedness, knew not where to go to learn to pray to God, to prepare to make their First Communion, and to find help and sympathy.

With truly Christian devotion, these young men, aided by two good priests of the church of St. Etienne du Mont, at Paris, have divided among themselves the evenings of every day of the year. They consecrate two hours every day to instruct their little protégés, to teach them to know God, to love him with their whole hearts, and to serve Him faithfully. From time to time they give rewards to the best-disposed, doubtless very trifling, but of great worth to the chimney-sweeps, so true it is that everything in this world has a

relative value. When the children are sick they visit them, mount up to their poor garrets, and fill the father's and the mother's place.

The great feast day of this little society is the day of the First Communion. Upon that day all are good and everything is beautiful. The little sweepers are swept, in their turn, both as regards the soul and body. Like unto our divine Lord who in love humiliated Himself to wash the feet of His Apostles, these true Christians overcome their repugnance, and themselves wash, or rather scrub, comb, and brush these unfortunate children, who have been neither washed nor combed, perhaps, since they left their native country. After this toilet it is often difficult to recognize them except by the sound of the voice. Their black clothes are put on one side to be washed and cleaned, and each chimney-sweep is dressed in a complete costume of dark blue velvet, such as is worn in Savoy; a white shirt, stockings, shoes, necktie, cap,—nothing is wanting.

The next morning all, masters and pupils, fathers and children, go to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont, where the parish priest joins in the feast, and surround this humble First Communion with all the solemnity of Catholic worship. After the chimney-sweeps, the catechists approach in their turn to the holy altar and receive from God Himself their anticipated recompense. After the ceremony the children are taken to the house of some generous person, or to some religious community, and they breakfast, play, and pass in perfect joy that day—which is the greatest and the happiest of their life.

See how great things Christians may do with faith and love, with scarcely any material resources. For, although a little money is wanted for all good works, it is not upon the money, but upon the charity, that they depend.

We shall conclude this short notice with a touching little incident which happened upon this occasion. To one of the assemblies met to discuss the possibility of taking a house in which board and lodging might be provided for the most destitute children, there came a lady much interested in the work, bringing with her her little boy, Odon de V——, aged ten or eleven years. This good little child was so touched by what he heard and saw that he wrote the following letter to the director of the work, sending him forty francs as alms:

"PARIS, January 28th.

"MONSIEUR: I have sent you some money to make a bed for your little chimney-sweeps in the new house of which you told us on Sun

day, for I think you are going to do all you can to have it, and to continue to do good to these poor little children. How they seemed to be enjoying their *brioches* on Sunday! How happy they seemed!

"As I had not much money in my purse I made a little bargain with papa; I gave him my word of honor to do my best every week from now till Easter to deserve the mark for good conduct at the school I go to, and papa was so good as to advance me at once enough to pay for a bed for a little chimney-sweep. But now I must keep my word; and to do that, I have need of grace from God, and I think it would help me very much if my friends the poor little chimney-sweeps would pray a little for me.

"Ask them, I entreat you, monsieur, you who are their good father, to pray a little for Odon de V——, who will be very grateful to you."

FÉNELON AND POOR PIERROT.

DOUBTLESS you know the name of Fénelon, the holy and learned Archbishop of Cambray. The following is the history of his first sermon:

Two hundred years ago, in the time of Fénelon, it was the custom of young people destined to the ecclesiastical state to endeavor to speak in public by means of certain oratorical exercises; and for this purpose brilliant assemblies often met in the largest hotels of Paris to listen to the young aspirants. Fénelon was fifteen, and already wore the dress of an ecclesiastic. He was, moreover, remarkable for his holiness, his grace, and his modesty; he was diligent and intellectual, but, above all, most charitable to the poor. His father, the Marquis of Fénelon, chose the Hôtel de Boufflers for the début of his young abbé, feeling assured that it would be a remarkable success. Consequently the day was fixed, notwithstanding the resistance of the retiring Fénelon, and the most brilliant company was invited to form the auditory. All the great lords and ladies of the court of Louis XIV. had taken their places in the grand salon prepared for this purpose, and were astonished to find that the young preacher did not appear. His father, vexed at a delay which he could not understand, tried to make excuses for the young abbé to Madame Boufflers and the principal personages in the assembly, but at last Fénelon himself entered the room and, his face a little flushed with the diffidence natural to his youth and his retiring disposition, sat down at the table prepared for him.

"Messieurs et mesdames," he said, "I ask your pardon for having

kept so illustrious an audience waiting, but had it been necessary to keep you an hour longer, and had the King himself been present here, I should not have hesitated to do so. On arriving at the Hôtel de Boufflers, I perceived at an angle of the house a poor little Savoyard lying on the ground and half covered by the thick flakes of snow which were falling. Touched and surprised at this sight I stopped and approached the unfortunate child. 'What are you doing here, my child?' I said to him. He burst into tears, and without answering my question he murmured these despairing words:

"'I would I were dead!'

"'Dead, my poor child! Then you are very miserable? You have no one who loves you?'

"'Ah, yes, my good monsieur, I am very miserable,' cried the child. 'I am lost! I cannot return home to my mother; I have nothing to do but die!'

"I asked his name, his age, and the cause of his grief; and he told his story in these words:

"'My name is Pierrot, I am twelve years old. I am a Savoyard, and I left my home and my mother five years ago. I have worked as hard as I could at sweeping chimneys, and I saved my money so as to be able to return to my country as soon as possible, and take my little hoard to my dear mother. I put by every half-penny, every farthing, and at last I had three hundred and fifteen pounds hidden under a brick in a garret where I sleep. Very light-hearted, I was getting ready to set out with two relations who are returning to Savoy; and this morning when I lifted my brick to take out my treasure and put it in a bag to carry with me, I found the place empty—it had all been stolen. Now I dare not return to my country. They would say I had been a wicked boy and had forgotten my parents. I can do nothing now but die, for I am too miserable.'

"Such is, in a few words," continued Fénelon, "the story told me by the poor little Pierrot, who could scarcely speak for sobbing and for the bitter cold. I took him up in my arms and carried him to this hotel, where I confided him to the care of the landlord. Since Providence put in my way this opportunity of doing good, I could not let it pass; and since this poor little one of Jesus Christ has a momentary asylum in the very hotel where you have met together to listen to me, I feel bound to ask you to co-operate in this good work, and I therefore preferred to speak to you of the poor Savoyard, instead of giving the discourse you expected from me.]

ask you now in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of the poor and the consoler of the afflicted, to give your alms for my little protégé, whose fate thus rests in your hands. A piece of silver or gold is little for you, but for this poor child it is much—it is joy, and life, and happiness. Give, and God Himself will restore it to you."

During this improvised sermon, all the more touching for its simplicity, many eyes were full of tears, which another discourse would have failed to call forth. The young abbé, much moved himself, and a little confused, it must be confessed, at his own temerity, prepared to make the collection for poor Pierrot, when the child, led by the Marquis de Boufflers, who had sent for him, was introduced into the midst of this noble and brilliant assemblage.

The sight of the poor boy, whose sweet and innocent face expressed both grief and astonishment, reanimated the kindly feelings which Fénelon's recital had aroused in all who heard him. They questioned the child, and in his original patois he related anew the details which we have just given. Madame de Boufflers in her turn pleaded his cause with much earnestness and enthusiasm, and declared that she would herself make the collection in the brown cap of the little Savoyard.

"But I warn you before commencing," she said, "that I receive nothing but gold." Not having any herself, she unfastened one of her earrings and gave it as her own offering. Louis fell like hail into the old cap, which had never served such a purpose before. The collection amounted to more than two thousand pounds. The child thought he was dreaming, and could not believe that all this gold was for him. As soon as he was convinced of it, he began dancing, and crying, and laughing, forgetting all the people who surrounded him, and thinking only of his mother. The Marquis de Boufflers, having affectionately thanked Fénelon in the name of all present for the pleasure he had given them that evening, kept the little Savoyard for some days at her hotel, where he was cared for by her orders. She clothed him from head to foot, gave him beautiful presents for his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, paid the expenses of his journey, and, making up the sum to three thousand pounds, charged herself to see that it reached the mother of the child in safety.

Such was Fénelon's first sermon. In the course of years, when he had become a priest and Archbishop of Cambray, it is possible that he may have preached sermons quite as good, but I am very sure that he never preached a better.

SAVED BY THE MEMORY OF HIS FIRST COMMUNION.

In the year 1841 I was at Paris and taking part in the Conference of St. Vincent de Paul.

Some of the young people who composed it had the habit of visiting the sick in the hospital once or twice a week.

The Hospital Necker, in the Rue de Sèvres, had fallen to my share. I always commenced my visits with the chapel, going there to ask God to bless the work which for love of Him I was about to accomplish, and to accompany the words and counsel I was going to give to my sick people with His benediction; and then, when I had finished my visit to the wards, I returned to lay the fruits at the sacred feet of our divine Master.

I was obliged to leave Paris in the spring, but I always remember one touching incident of which I was the witness upon my last visit to the sick of Necker. The ward I had to visit that day was entrusted to the care of a sister of charity who had grown old in this holy ministry, and who was no less indefatigable in allaying the sufferings of her patients than she was zealous for the salvation of their souls. On arriving I went, according to my custom, to receive the orders of this good sister. She especially recommended to me six or seven sick people: one newly arrived and still unknown to her; another in a dying state, and needing to be strengthened and comforted; another already moved to repentance, and on the point of conversion, etc.

"And then," she added, "go to No. 39; you will find there a man of thirty-two or thirty-three years of age in the last stage of consumption, and who cannot live more than two or three days. I have tried in vain to get him to listen to me or speak to me, but he has driven me away from him three or four times, and has only received the chaplain with rough, ungracious words. One of your confrères of St. Vincent de Paul has visited him many times with no better success. He will probably receive you in the same way, but no trouble must be spared. We must only consider the glory of God, and the poor soul to be saved."

"Well, my good sister," I replied, "if he dismisses me, why, then, I shall be dismissed, that is all; I shall be none the worse for that. But say a Hail Mary for the poor man while I go and speak to him."

I went my rounds, and, going from bed to bed, I arrived at No.

39. It gave me quite a shock when I first caught sight of him. Death was written indelibly on his face. He was propped up on the pillows of his bed. His sallow face was ghastly in its pallor, and his emaciated countenance and sunken eyes gave his dark eyes a strange wild look. I approached his bed. He fixed his eyes on me without speaking.

"The sister has told me, my poor friend, that you are suffering much, and that you have been ill for a long time," I said to him.

No answer, but the expression of the man's face grew harder and harder, as though he would say: "I want none of your condolences; leave me in peace."

I appeared not to perceive this. "Are you suffering much just now—is there anything I can do for you?" I asked.

No answer.

"But you must try to make a virtue of necessity, my poor friend, and offer your sufferings to God as an expiation of your sins; thus at least they will be of profit to you."

Still the same silence, and the same reception. The situation grew embarrassing. The expression of the sick man became more and more menacing, and I expected every moment that he would give some insulting reply. But suddenly divine Providence sent me an inspiration. I went close up to him, and, bending down, I said in a whisper, "Did you make a good first communion?"

These words had the effect of an electric shock. He made a slight movement, the expression of his face changed, and he murmured rather than said:

"Yes, monsieur."

"And were you not happy at that time?"

"Yes, monsieur," he answered with emotion, and I could see that his eyes had filled with tears.

Then I took his hands in mine. "And why were you happy then, if not because you were pure and chaste, loving and fearing God, living a Christian life? But this happiness may be yours again; God is as merciful as then; He has not changed!"

He was still weeping.

"I am sure you would be glad to make your confession?"

"Yes, monsieur," he said with an effort, and held out his arms to embrace me.

You may imagine how gladly I responded; then I gave him a little advice to help him in the carrying out of his good resolution. After that I left him, and announced to the sister the unexpected

success of my visit. I do not know what followed; but that which remains deeply engraven on my mind, or rather on my heart, is the marvellous power of the mercy of God, which could change a heart so hardened in an instant by the help of a single word! The remembrance of his first communion alone sufficed to convert and probably to save this poor dying man. Happy for him that he had made it well; for if he had negligently fulfilled this great act of the Christian life, the remembrance that I recalled to him would have doubtless made upon his heart a very faint impression. Thus good produces good, and with God nothing is lost.

I would impress this upon the young who are entering upon life, and upon parents who are charged to watch over them, and to implant in their young souls those salutary impressions which shall be, perhaps, one day the means of their salvation.

MARTYRDOM OF THE SOLDIERS PROCESSUS AND MARTINIAN.

One of the most venerated sanctuaries of Rome, and one which fills the heart of the Christian with deep and almost painful emotions, is undoubtedly the Mamertine Prison, close to the Forum. It was there that the two great Apostles of the Faith, St. Peter and St. Paul, were imprisoned for nine months by the order of the cruel Nero, Emperor of Rome. It was from there that they set forth to receive with death the crown of martyrdom after having had the happiness to convert and to baptize their two keepers, Processus and Martinian, and the forty-seven soldiers appointed by the Senate as their guard.

Before relating the sublime drama by the memory of which this place is hallowed, a few words must be said about the place itself.

The prison consists of two subterranean stories of a circular form, hollowed out of the living rock. The unfortunate prisoners condemned to death were let down into the first cavern through a circular hole about three feet in diameter cut out in the middle of the vault; from there they were again let down with ropes through a similar opening into the second cavern, which was beneath the first. There Jugurtha, that terrible enemy of Rome, taken prisoner in Africa, died of cold and hunger. Lentulus, Cethegus, and the other accomplices of Catilina, who attempted to overthrow the Senate in the time of Nero, were thrown into this prison and massacred. The

upper prison, at the time of the imprisonment of the holy Apostles, was occupied by the keepers and the Roman solders; and a staircase had then been constructed which led down to the Roman prison reserved for the Apostles themselves.

It was in this terrible dungeon, deprived of light and of fresh air, scarcely six feet high and about fifteen in length, that during nine months the two great saints lived an almost miraculous life, chained to a broken column. We may see to-day this sacred column and the two rings into which the chain was fastened; and I leave you to judge of the feelings which the sight inspires. We may also see the fountain which, at the word of St. Peter, sprung forth miraculously from the rock itself, without any opening or any fissure appearing to offer any passage to the water, which, nevertheless, has not ceased to spring from the soil. It was in this fountain that the Apostles baptized their keepers and the Roman soldiers whom they had the glory and joy to convert to the Christian faith, thus resembling their divine Master, who from the cross, in the midst of His last sufferings and of the cruel ignominy to which He was subjected by the Jews, converted the thief crucified at His side and the Roman officer of the guard, only by the sight of His resignation and His divine love for men.

Processus and Martinian, when receiving baptism and embracing Christianity, were not ignorant that their holy temerity would soon be rewarded—by Nero, with death; by God, with the palm of martyrdom. The frightful tortures inflicted by the cruel tyrant upon the thousands of Christians who had already watered with their blood every circus of Rome, the sight of the treatment endured by the two illustrious prisoners under their keeping, and the grave warnings given them by the Apostles themselves when administering the Sacrament of Baptism, could not leave them in doubt as to the fate which awaited them. But faith, says the Scripture, removes mountains: it welcomes death and suffering, and even invests them with a beauty and attraction which cause them to be received with joy and eagerness.

When the magistrate named Paulinus, to whom Nero had confided the care of Peter and of Paul, and who had in his turn confided them to Processus and Martinian, heard of their conversion, he caused them to be arrested and brought before him. They then commenced to give thanks to God, who had conferred on them the grace of confessing the faith.

"What are you?" demanded Paulinus.

"We are Christians," they said, "and confess the faith of Jesus Christ."

"Sacrifice to the gods; return to our friendship, and Cæsar will load you with honor."

"Peace with thy gods! Sacrifice with us to the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to escape the torments and eternal flames of hell."

Paulinus, irritated by their holy constancy, commanded that their mouths and teeth should be broken with stones; but they, in the midst of groans drawn from their lips by pain, celebrated the glory of God, and said: "No, we will not sacrifice to thy gods, who are only demons; we are Christians; the Christ is the Son of God!"

A tripod was then brought upon which was a little statue of Jupiter. Paulinus commanded them to burn incense before the idol and to deny Jesus Christ. But they began to laugh, and spit upon this divinity of metal, repeating, "We are Christians!"

Inflamed with anger, Paulinus had them fastened to the rack, the instrument chosen for their suffering; their persecutors dislocated their limbs with cords and struck them with whips. "Deny your Christ," cried the judge, "and you shall be delivered." But even while their bones were being broken, they replied: "We are Christians! We will never deny the God who has been crucified, crowned with thorns, pierced with nails, and has died for us!"

During this time a noble Roman lady named Lucina encouraged them with these words: "Persevere, soldiers of Christ; fear not the suffering which will lead you to heaven." Being unfastened from the rack, they were stretched upon it a second time, and their bodies torn with rods armed with iron points. They carried them half dead to their prison, where Lucina came to minister to them. In the mean time the magistrate Paulinus was struck with sudden death. At this news Nero commanded the two martyrs to be sacrificed immediately. Taken from their dungeon they were led out of Rome and beheaded. Lucina received their bodies, embalmed them, and buried them in the Catacombs.

When the time arrived in which the Christian faith could emerge from her mysterious hiding-place, and when the worship of Christ had become that of the Roman emperors and could come forth into the sunlight, when the Rome of the Catacombs was to dethrone the Rome of the Cæsars and plant the cross upon the ruins of their palaces, the bodies of innumerable martyrs, whom the piety of the faithful had rescued from profanation, were withdrawn from their subterranean retreat and received the public veneration of Chris-

tians. Among the temples which rose on all sides, one of the first, as was just, was consecrated to the two great Apostles, martyrs and founders of the Church, and received their precious relics. But in the Basilica of St. Peter their bodies are not isolated. A touching thought of the Sovereign Pontiffs has been to unite in one common veneration those who had been united in one common martyrdom. They desired that the two bodies of Processus and Martinian should keep watch as it were over those of St. Peter and St. Paul, since it had been their mission to keep watch over them during the last days of their life.

The Christian, prostrate before the tomb of the two Apostles beneath the dome of St. Peter's, sees on his right an altar which covers the relics of their two keepers. St. Processus and St. Martinian are there to render witness to their teachers, and to the miracles which God accomplished by their hands. The sons have not been separated from their fathers; the keepers have not left their prisoners.

THE MARTYR GERONIMO.

On the 27th of December, 1852, some artillerymen, on demolishing the fort of the *Vingt Quatre-Heures*, at Algiers, remarked an excavation in which they perceived human bones. The skeleton had preserved its position; the arms were crossed behind the back, and a cord which had served to tie the hands had adhered to the mortar.

They recognized, without difficulty, the sacred relics of a martyr of the sixteenth century, named Geronimo, whom they knew had been buried at this place, and for whom they had sought in vain for many years. The history of this martyr is very edifying; it is related by the most authentic documents as follows:

Geronimo was an Arab by birth. The Spaniards, then masters of the town of Oran, exposed him in a slave market while quite a child. A good priest bought him, instructed him in the Catholic faith, baptized him, and gave him his name of Geronimo.

At the age of eight years the boy was seized by the Arabs, and either consented or was forced to become once more a Mahometan. But he did not lose the remembrance of the Christian religion, and when about twenty-five years old, being no longer able to resist the voice of truth ever urging him to return to her, he went back to Oran, abjured Islamism, married a Christian, and lived many years in the practice of Christian virtues and of the Catholic faith. But Providence had destined him to seal with his blood the faith which

he had voluntarily embraced, and which he practised with a fervor that gave him a high place among the elect.

In the month of May, 1569, Geronimo, going for an excursion on the sea with nine companions, was surprised by some Arab pirates, who made them all prisoners and took them to Algiers, where they were sold as slaves. Algiers was then in the possession of the Arabs, and Ali Pacha, who governed the city, became the owner of Geronimo. It soon came to his knowledge that his slave was an Arab by birth, and that he had become a Catholic; and he used every means—menaces, punishments, and promises—to induce him to apostatize. But Geronimo preferred his holy faith to the liberty and the riches that were promised him; and to every inducement and to every threat he answered nothing but these words, "I am a Christian."

Ali Pacha, furious at what he called his obstinacy, resolved to take a terrible vengeance. He had ordered a fort to be constructed, now called the fort of the "Twenty-four Hours," and he often visited the works himself.

One day when he was examining the manœuvres which crushed the earth in the great chests which serve for the construction of blocks of clay, a diabolical thought suddenly suggested itself to his mind.

He called Michel de Navarre, his master mason, and showing him a chest just prepared, but which had not yet been filled with earth, he said to him: "Leave that chest empty until to-morrow, for I intend to make clay with the body of that dog of Oran who refuses to return to the religion of Mahomet." After these words, Ali Pacha returned to Dar-Soulthan, now called Djenina, and which was then the palace of the governors of Algiers.

The end of the day approached; Michel, after having prepared the chest, assembled his workmen, and returned with them to the prison. He went immediately to find Geronimo, and told him what had just passed, exhorting him to resignation.

"Blessed be God for all things!" cried the future martyr; "let not these infidels imagine that they will frighten me with the horrible suffering they have invented, and cause me to renounce the true religion from fear. All that I ask of God is that He will have pity on my soul and pardon my sins."

From that moment Geronimo prepared himself for the glorious witness which he was to render the following day. There was a chapel in the prison, and also a priest among the slaves. Geronimo

confessed, received communion and extreme unction, and passed the night in prayer.

On the 18th of September, 1569, four *chaouchs* of Ali Pacha came early to the prison and asked for Geronimo, who, on hearing them, came forth from the chapel where he was still praying.

"Dog, Jew, traitor, why will you not become once more a Mussulman?" they shouted in chorus as soon as they perceived him.

The holy slave answered not a word, but gave himself into their hands. He arrived at the fort in their company, Ali Pacha and a great number of Turks, renegades, and Moors being already assembled there, and thirsting for Christian blood.

"Hold! dog," cried Ali, "wilt thou not return to the religion of Mahomet?"

"For nothing in the world," replied Geronimo; "I am a Christian, and a Christian I will remain."

"Enough!" cried the exasperated Pacha; "thou seest that chest; in that thou shalt be crushed, then buried alive."

"Do what thou wilt," replied the martyr of God courageously; "I am prepared for everything, and nothing in the world will make me abandon the faith of my Lord Jesus Christ."

Ali Pacha, seeing clearly that nothing would overcome his resolution, commanded that his chains should be taken off, and that his hands and feet should be bound. In this state he was seized by the four *chaouchs*, who threw him to the bottom of the chest.

We see, upon this occasion, that the most cruel among those ferocious men were not those who were born in the country. A Spaniard, named Tamango, who had become a Mussulman under the name of Djafar, jumped into the chest upon Geronimo, took up one of the pestles, and demanded that earth should be brought to him instantly, which was done. This miserable man then commenced to strike violently on the poor martyr, who never uttered a cry, or allowed a single murmur to escape from his lips. Other renegades, wishing to appear as good Mussulmans as Tamango, seized the pestles in their turn, and ended by stifling Geronimo under the clay.

The chest was then filled to the top; the martyr reposed for three centuries in his glorious tomb.

All these tigers, satiated by the sight of this terrible suffering, returned gaily to Algiers in the suite of Ali Pacha, who repeated more than once upon the way: "I could not have believed that this Christian would have endured death with so much courage."

Such is the history of the death of the martyr Geronimo. It is

thus that Christians know how to die; it is thus that they prefer agony and death to the shame and crime of apostacy, knowing that God will reward them in heaven by eternal and infinite felicity for those sufferings which they have borne on earth for the love and glory of His holy name.

THE LAST MOMENTS AND DEATH OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEO.

Saint Charles Borromeo is one of the greatest men who have ever lived. Born in Italy in 1538, he belonged to one of the most powerful and celebrated families of Milan. A tender piety preserved his childhood from the faults which are usual at this thoughtless age, and, as his holiness constantly increased, the forty-six years which he lived in this world were passed in innocence, unsullied by a single grievous sin. Called to the service of God and to the ministry of the holy altar, he embraced the ecclesiastical state very early in life; and, his uncle having been raised to the dignity of the Sovereign Pontificate, under the name of Pius IV., St. Charles, while still young, found himself elevated, by no wish of his own, to the most brilliant offices of the Roman Church. At twenty-three he was a Cardinal, and was distinguished in the ranks of the Sacred College by his fervent piety, his love of justice, his zeal for the sanctification of souls, his inexhaustible tenderness for the unfortunate, his prudence, and his energy.

Appointed Archbishop of Milan, he left Rome, in spite of the entreaties of his uncle, and during the twenty-three years that his episcopate lasted he consecrated himself wholly to the salvation of the souls of those who constituted his immense flock. He never counted the cost when any opportunity offered of doing good. A fortune of more than five hundred thousand a year was spent in good works, in useful Christian foundations, and in alms. Once this great Bishop was known to give away eighty-six thousand dollars in a single day.

We cannot here relate the details of this admirable life. Written by his secretary, who was an eye-witness of the facts which he relates, it was sufficient to effect the conversion of a Protestant minister into whose hands it fell by chance. This minister relinquished all his prejudices against the Catholic priesthood, and on entering the bosom of the Church he followed the voice of his conscience, which said to him: A religion which produces such lives as these is

evidently true. The following is, in a few words, the history of the last moments and glorious death of the holy Archbishop of Milan:

The whole life of St. Charles was passed in prayer and good works, and was indeed a perpetual retreat, but yet he never failed to make one every year; and then in the presence of God he spent some days in making a severe review of his conscience, in order to commence anew with a still more fervent spirit of zeal, self-sacrifice, and devotion.

In the year 1584, which was that of his death, he made this retreat with more fervor than usual, in a religious house which became celebrated on account of the stay he made there, and called Montvarelle, upon the borders of Lake Maggiore, sixty miles from Milan. In a narrow cell which he had chosen for his room, he slept on planks covered only with an old piece of coarse cloth; he only rested three or four hours during the night, and ate nothing but bread and drank nothing but water. He increased his austerities, which were always most severe; prayed for six or eight hours every day, and passed a great part of the night in prayer. On the fifth day of his retreat he made his annual confession with a heart so broken with sorrow and such floods of tears, that his confessor could not himself refrain from weeping. He prepared himself the preceding night by remaining eight hours on his knees in prayer, without being exhausted, motionless, and ravished in ecstasy; and he found the time so short that he believed the clock had been put forward. As a vigorous laborer redoubles his energy as the end of the day draws near, so this great saint, considering that little time remained to him, gave himself up wholly to preparation. During all his retreats he had always been very closely united to God, but he now appeared more than ever absorbed in Jesus Christ, and detached from the things of the world. When he said Mass, he was so penetrated with God, and his tears fell so fast, that he was obliged to interrupt the Holy Sacrifice in order to wipe them away. His face then grew so radiant that it appeared transfigured with light, undoubtedly from that interior light which flooded his great soul.

At the end of this retreat, on the 24th of October, Our Lord, hearing the desires of His faithful servant, sent him an attack of fever, the commencement of the sickness which in a few days should put an end to his earthly exile. St. Charles, ever severe to himself, continued his penitential exercises; and it was only by the desire of his confessor that he consented to soften his austerities a little, and to shorten his prayers and his vigils. He allowed his bread to be pre-

ST. CHARLES BORROMEO.

Golden Words from St. Charles Borromeo

ON CHRISTIAN HOPE

"HE who serves God with a pure heart, laying aside all human interests and seeking only the divine honor, may hope to succeed in his affairs even when to others they seem desperate, since the operations of God are beyond the ken of mortal vision, and depend on a loftier than human policy.

"Behold Jesus Christ crucified, who is the only foundation of our hope: He is our Mediator and Advocate; the victim and sacrifice of our sins. He is goodness and patience itself: His mercy is moved by the tears of sinners, and He never refuses pardon and grace to those who ask it with a truly contrite and humble heart.

"God wishes us not to rest upon anything but His infinite goodness; do not let us expect anything, hope anything, or desire anything but from Him, and let us put our trust and confidence in Him alone."

ON THE PRESENCE OF GOD

"He who desires to make any progress in the service of God must begin every day of his life with new ardor, and must keep himself in the presence of God as much as possible, and must have no other view or end in all his actions but the Divine honor."

pared in water, without salt and without butter, which was a great delicacy for him. He also permitted a little straw to be placed upon the boards on which he slept, and shortened his prayers by some hours. On the 28th he had a fresh attack which caused him much suffering; but the strength and vigor of his soul sustaining the weakness of a body exhausted by sickness and penance, the holy Cardinal resolved to discontinue his spiritual exercises in order to be at Milan for the approaching feast, and to say the Pontifical Mass there according to his custom.

Upon his road there were two or three towns through which he desired to pass in order to complete certain charitable endowments and reforms of which he had laid the foundation in one of his pastoral visits. Notwithstanding the fever from which he was suffering, he travelled all night, and crossed Lake Maggiore. He said evening prayers with the boatmen and with those in his suite, and asked them if they had prayed to God when they had set forth on their journey. He made them promise that in future they would always say the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Credo at the commencement of each voyage. He passed almost the whole night in prayer, and having reached the little town of Canobbio, the end of the first part of his journey, he recited his office, confessed, and celebrated Mass. After his thanksgiving he took some bread and water to fortify himself a little, regulated the spiritual affairs of the place, and, notwithstanding his fatigue, went up into the pulpit to preach to the people. From Canobbio he went to Ascona, in spite of the bad weather. When he arrived there he was consumed by burning fever, and was requested to take a little rest in bed; but from a spirit of penance he would lie on nothing but straw. The attack having passed off, he felt that he could continue his journey so as to be at Milan on the feast of All Saints. But the doctors opposed it, and he passed the night in this place. The following day they found him risen quite early in the morning, and reciting his office on his knees. He prepared himself to say Mass, and celebrated after having confessed in the church, although he was so feeble that when making the genuflexions some one was obliged to assist him to rise. Nevertheless, he was anxious to fast the whole of that day, because it was the vigil of All Saints, and he only took a bitter draught by the desire of his physician.

He then set out for a town called Arona, and passed a part of the journey in praying and exhorting the boatmen to live like Christians.

He spoke to them of the feast of All Saints with so much fervor that they could not restrain their tears. During the little time that he remained at Arona, he gave his whole attention to serious affairs which concerned the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The next day, the feast of All Saints, he rose two hours after midnight, and prayed until day; then, as on the vigil, he recited his office, confessed (which he did every day), and prepared to say Mass at seven o'clock. There were a great number to receive communion because of the feast. This Mass was the last that he celebrated. A remedy taken at the wrong time increased his disease; the fever became very violent and continued until his death.

The next day (All Souls) he again desired to say Mass, but was so weak that he could not do so. He desired at least to go to church to hear it, and he confessed and communicated with much fervor, afterward reciting his office on his knees. After having taken some food he embarked once more, and arrived at Milan.

II.

The more nearly the moment approached in which St. Charles was to quit the earth, the more closely were his mind and heart united to God. He had always had a great devotion to the mysteries of the Passion of Our Lord, which formed the constant object of his thoughts. This attraction grew more forcible at this supreme moment; and, as he could no longer apply himself to close meditation on the sufferings of his divine Master, he had two pictures placed near him in which the Son of God was represented in His sepulchre and during His agony in the Garden of Olives. One glance was thus sufficient to recall the love of his Saviour, and to help him to unite his sufferings to the sufferings of his Lord.

It was the 3d of November. The doctors, after having carefully examined his condition, declared he was in danger. Toward two o'clock the fever became still more violent and was accompanied by extreme drowsiness. It became necessary to announce to the Cardinal that he had only a little time longer to live. His confessor approached his bed, and, his heart full of sorrow, told him with tears that his last hour was come, and that he must soon appear before his Saviour. His great spirit did not shrink at this blow, and he replied calmly that he only desired to be fortified with the holy viaticum and extreme unction. They went immediately to the cathedral to seek the Blessed Sacrament, and had all the bells in Milan rung

to announce to the faithful the extremity of their well-beloved Bishop. During this time his family, his friends, and his servants arrived, with a considerable number of ecclesiastics, to receive for the last time the benediction of this holy pastor. He desired to raise his hand to bless them, but he could not even make the sign of the cross without aid, so great was his feebleness.

When the Blessed Sacrament was brought to him, he summoned all the strength he had left to receive his Saviour worthily. They clothed him in his sacred vestments; from a deep feeling of reverence he desired to leave his bed and kneel down to receive communion, but he found he was too weak to do this. While extreme unction was being administered, it was remarked that he made every possible effort to respond to the priest. Immediately after, the last agony began.

His chaplains, remembering that they had often heard him say that he desired to die in sackcloth and ashes, like St. Ambrose, his glorious predecessor, clothed him two hours before his death in sackcloth covered with blessed ashes. The chamber was full of ecclesiastics, some saying the prayers for the recommendation of the departing soul, others reading the Passion, and all obliged by tears to interrupt their prayers every moment. Father Adorus, the confessor of St. Charles, was by his side, holding the crucifix and suggesting a few simple and affecting thoughts from time to time. As soon as they saw that he was unconscious, sobs and tears broke forth from all present. A more affecting sight can scarcely be imagined: the great Cardinal, in death's fatal clutches, stretched upon his bed, his eyes raised to heaven, deprived of consciousness, clothed in sackcloth and covered with ashes!

After having remained from five until eight o'clock in the evening peacefully but rapidly sinking, the servant of God, his eyes ever fixed upon the image of his Saviour, which he had had placed before his bed, his face calm and radiant, rendered his pure soul into the hands of his Creator to receive in heaven the reward of all his labors for his divine Master.

His servants could not weary of kissing his hands and washing them with their tears. On his shoulders were great bruises caused by his discipline. His flesh was hard from the sackcloth which he always wore, and his body thin and wasted to a shadow. They clothed him in his white pontifical vestments, and exposed his body according to custom in Milan Cathedral. During the three days in which it lay there, there was such an immense concourse of people

that the streets and public places could not contain them, while the approaches to the archiepiscopal palace resembled the flux and reflux of an agitated sea. The poor, especially the widows and orphans, were disconsolate at the loss of their father. During the whole of this time the face of St. Charles preserved an expression of joy and beatitude, which appeared a manifest sign of his holiness and added to the affliction of the Milanese. They buried him according to his wishes in his own cathedral church, at the foot of the steps leading up to the choir, in the place most trodden under foot.

Many noted miracles obtained for this venerated tomb so universal a devotion that the Holy Apostolic See was almost immediately obliged to make preparations for the beatification and canonization of Cardinal Borromeo, who was finally declared a saint and proposed to the pastors of the Church and to the faithful as an accomplished model of all Christian and priestly virtues

A CONVICT'S LETTER.

During the terrible days of June of 1848, a horrible assassination was committed by the insurgents on the person of the courageous and excellent General de Bréa, who had been made prisoner by treason. When the civil war was at an end, justice overtook the guilty, and out of a great number who were tried by court-martial five were condemned to death as being guilty of the murder.

In the March of 1849, two were executed, and the sentence of the three others was commuted to hard labor for life. Among these last the most intelligent was a young librarian, named André C——, only twenty-three years of age. During his captivity he had deeply repented of the past, but the baneful influences of the prison at Rochfort, to which he was sent after the execution of his two companions, soon had their evil effects, and he was plunged once more into an abyss of evil.

In 1852, transferred to Cayenne, where he has since died, he partially escaped the contagion of the polluting atmosphere in which he lived, and was finally recalled, after a bitter experience, to sentiments more worthy of a man and a Christian. He wrote me a letter which was so touching, so full of faith, of resignation, and true piety, that I think the perusal of it can scarcely fail to be serviceable to my readers.

This is the letter written from Cayenne in June, 1856:

"Reverend and Dear Father:—By the kindness of the Jesuit

Fathers I am enabled to address this letter to you, and am going to write as much as possible on these four large sheets without any fear that you will think me troublesome. At the prison and penitentiaries, during seven years, that is to say, I have neglected my religious duties and have lived as those live who have no faith, and who seek by worldly sophisms and pretended morality to substitute for the fulfilment of religious duties those convenient morals which are indulgent to vice and find excuses for every baseness. During these seven years I have offended God by a sinful, reckless life, but, through His infinite goodness, every sin I have committed has brought upon me the dark shadow of remorse and shame; and an unquiet conscience has not ceased to warn me that eternal punishment would be the certain consequence of so guilty a life. Blessed be God for His great mercy toward me, for how many others, who sin continually as I did, do not have these wholesome warnings.

"Without having solicited it, I suddenly became the object of a favor which by separating me from the miserable herd of convicts deprived me of any excuse for continuing my evil life. God was waiting for that moment. To Him alone be glory!

"I assure you sincerely, my dear Father, that if I have preserved the faith while leading such a life, I attribute this miracle of mercy to the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and also to the beautiful letters you have so often written me, and which I read again and again, even at my worst moments.

"Since the Easter of this year I have had the happiness to approach many times to Holy Communion. Ah! how ardently I have desired to lead a life so pure as to enable me to approach to the Divine Banquet every day! But, alas! I am still a great sinner, and my sins, though less grievous than formerly, are no less numerous. If I were but more submissive to the holy will of God I should be able to gain some merit in my present position, where crosses, thank God, are not wanting to me. But no! . . . as if I should not thank God for sending me this life of trial by which to expiate my sins.

"Every time that I approach the holy altar I do not fail to remember you, and to pray to God to bless your efforts and to give fruit to all your labors for the exaltation of His Holy Church. I never forget to entreat Our Lord to watch over His beloved Spouse. Morning and evening I recite a Memorare for your intention, and I earnestly hope that our good Mother hears me, for I do not ask temporal favors for you, my dear Father, but rather that He will always give you

courage to defend the truth as you have done in "*Les Responses*," in which I fancied that a certain passage referred to me. It is about a man condemned for a horrible crime, who is ashamed of being chained up with a thief. This passage in which I believed you were thinking of me troubled me much; but, I, alas! my good Father, have grieved you in a very different way, and perhaps, after all, I was mistaken.

"And now permit me, my dear Father, to answer a question which may present itself to your mind. Will my conversion be of any advantage to me humanly speaking? No. . . . The practice of religion by a convict is regarded as an act of hypocrisy. . . . In the midst of all this, the Christian feels a certain pride in serving his divine Master, and for my own part I thank the Lord, who has found me worthy, in spite of my unworthiness, to hear His voice and to try and serve Him in a place where it is not He who reigns. I thank Him especially that this miserable state of things does not permit any temporal favor to be the reward of a Christian life, but rather an occasion for small and malignant persecutions.

"You asked me, dear Father, in your letter dated from Rome, what were the religious supplies of Guyane. The reverend fathers of the Society of Jesus have the charge of the penitentiaries. These good fathers are continually at the pillows of the sick, and I do not think that their detractors would feel disposed to come here to take their place in order to prevent them from ministering to the convicts; but, in case they should have any desire, it is right they should be warned that their ministrations would be required in yellow fever, in malignant and typhoid fever.

"In this life God tries His friends more severely than His enemies. The life of the religious of the Society of Jesus at Guyane is a proof of this: they are very numerous, and quite lately in one fortnight two have died—the Rev. Father Plumpf, Superior, and the Rev. Father Dabadie, whom perhaps you knew, as he came from Paris; they have lost seven or eight fathers, I believe, since they arrived at Guyane.

"The colonial clergy consist of secular priests and of the religious of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary. These are directed by an apostolical Prefect.

"The sons of the good and holy Tibermann are very excellent religious, from which I have received much kindness. They have a good library, where I get as many books as possible. Their charity and zeal for the unfortunate negroes are not always crowned with success, for the white men are there also. . . . And then the blacks

are like great children. Nevertheless God has there, as everywhere, His elect. There are among these young people chosen souls, whose simple, earnest faith fills the hearts of Christians with joy.

"In our prayer-books there is often written: 'The seal of the Christian,' 'the sign of the Christian,' 'the symbol of the Christian.' I assure you, my dear Father, that these expressions are far from being metaphors. All these poor blacks are ugly enough to frighten any one; but in spite of their ugliness it is easy to distinguish those who are good Christians from those who are not; the expression of the former is kind and gentle; and when they go to communion they are in a manner transfigured; then, I assure you, they are, in my eyes, quite beautiful. As a rule, the black man is, as yet, no philosopher; he practises his religion, or he does not practise it, but he has faith; and if it were not for the white men they would all practise it.

"In the Life of the good F. Tibermann by Don Pitra, I have remarked the engraving which represents the just man after death, and at the bottom I read 'G. de S. . . . prêtre;' this engraving did me great good, and I believe that if I had not been converted it would have helped to make me detest my sins.

"Before concluding I have two favors to ask of you, dear Father: the first is that I should like to possess a medal of the Immaculate Conception, a crucifix, and a rosary blessed by His Holiness.

"The second favor I would ask from your charity, dear Father, is to pray for me a little after my death. I have arranged that you shall be informed of it. I shall have no one to render me this service, and yet, remembering my numerous sins, I may well say with Bayard: 'A thousand years of fasting in the desert on bread and water would not expiate them.'

"If I make this request of you, Monseigneur and dear Father, it is because I shall not always live to see others die, but that my turn will also come. As regards death, I am not afraid; not, indeed, that I trust in my own merits, but in the great mercy of God.

"If you would kindly send the little things for which I have asked you to the reverend fathers of the Society of Jesus at Paris, they will find means to send them on to Guyane. I do not ask for an answer to this. You know, dear Father, how happy it will make me when you shall think fit to write me a few words.

"Here I must conclude, for I see that I have already written far too much, but it is so long since I have had any talk with you, that I wished to make up for lost time.

"I am, dear Father, with profound respect, your very humble and respectful son in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

"ANDRÉ C."

THE ADMIRABLE MARTYRDOM OF THE VENERABLE AUGUSTE CHAPDELAINE AND TWO OTHER CHRISTIANS OF CHINA.

MARTYR means witness. The testimony of blood, that is to say, of entire self-devotion, has never been wanting to the true religion, and in our own days, as in the first ages of the Church, the disciples of Jesus are ready to die for their divine Master.

On the 29th of February, 1856, a missionary priest, Auguste Chapdelaine, received in China the glorious palm of martyrdom, and added his name to the long catalogue of the heroes of the faith and love of Jesus Christ. Born in France, at Rochelle, in 1814, Auguste Chapdelaine consecrated himself to God in the ecclesiastical state, and, for three years only, he had commenced, in the midst of the idolatrous provinces of China, the apostolic life of the missionary. God had visibly blessed his efforts, and the budding Christianity which he directed was full of promise, when the blind vengeance of a woman destroyed everything. This woman—a Chinese, and still a pagan, was the wife of a newly converted Christian, and, having had some domestic disagreement with her husband, she went in spite to denounce him to the mandarin (a magistrate charged with the administration of criminal justice), and to denounce with him all that she knew of the Christian mission in that country. The magistrate, a furious enemy of the Christians, sent a number of his satellites to arrest the European missionary and twenty or twenty-five Christians whose names had been especially pointed out to him. Père Chapdelaine, warned of the danger, had concealed himself with a pious neophyte, named Laurent Pé Mou, in a house which he believed secure. After terrible treatment, which alone constituted a veritable martyrdom, all the Christians accused, and some others also, were loaded with chains, taken before the mandarin, and cast into prison. Among them a young Christian widow named Agnes principally distinguished herself; she had been born a Christian, and had greatly contributed by the generosity of her zeal to the conversion of a large number of idolatrous Chinese women.

The missionary was still hidden. Five or six women, wives or sisters of some of the arrested Christians, came to him to ask him

what they ought to do, and if it would be well for them to present themselves at the tribunal to beg for the release of their husbands or their brothers. The missionary advised them to do so, but, as they were afraid, the courageous Laurent Pé-Mou, the dear neophyte and companion of the priest of Jesus Christ, put himself at their head, and, braving all danger, presented himself before the mandarin. But he, having learned that Laurent was a Christian as well as the women who accompanied him, would not even listen to his petition, but caused them all to be loaded with irons.

During this time they had discovered the missionary's refuge. His house was surrounded; the chief of the guards entered his room, where he found him prostrate in prayer, and preparing himself for sacrifice, like the Saviour in the Garden of Olives. They then seized upon the holy priest, chained him with two other Christians whom they found in his house, and led them together to the mandarin's tribunal; so that in the evening of the 25th of February these noble confessors, to the number of four or five and twenty, were all united to render homage to the sanctity of their faith. How grand a spectacle! How beautiful it must have been in the sight of all the courts of heaven, and how touching for those poor neophytes who, from their first entrance into Christianity, had so willingly embraced the opprobrium and humiliation of their divine Master's life below. Then they understood the signification of a miraculous sign which Heaven had given them, doubtless to increase their courage. At Yao-chan, on the very day upon which the arrest took place, a crown of light with a cross in the middle was seen above this village, and was perceived by the idolaters as well as by the faithful. The pagans declared that it was an evil augury of the accused; the Christians, on the contrary, were thus enabled to understand later on that it was through the cross that they should gain the crown, and they humbly submitted to any fate that Providence should decree.

As soon as they reached the prison they were loaded with irons and severely beaten with the ratan, and were subjected to an interrogatory, of which we have some fragments preserved by eye-witnesses. To chains they added the cangue, which they had the happiness to bear all night for the name of Jesus Christ.

On the following day Laurent Pé-Mou appeared the first at the bar of the tribunal. He who had offered himself so gladly to follow the missionary in his tribulation had the glory of being the first to confess Jesus Christ with all the courage and constancy with which a lively faith inspired his soul. The mandarin, addressing himself to

him, tried from the commencement to appeal him with terrible menaces.

"Why," he demanded, "do you practise the religion of the Lord of heaven, which is a perverse religion, and leads the people to rebellion?"

"No," replied the generous neophyte, "the religion of the God of heaven deserves none of your reproaches. It teaches us instead to avoid evil, to practise good, and to save our souls."

"Why do you follow the teacher Ma [the Chinese name of M. Chapdelaine]?"

"I follow him because he teaches us to know the true God and to practise His holy religion."

"Will you follow him still?"

"I will never forsake him!"

"If you do not forsake him, and if you do not renounce your religion, your head shall be cut off."

"The mandarin may cut off my head, and not only mine but those of my wife and my children; but to renounce my religion, the religion of the God of heaven, to cease to address my prayers to Him, ah! never; I will never be guilty of so black a treason. Mandarin, cut off my head, if you wish, but I will never apostatize."

The mandarin, irritated at this answer, ordered many stripes to be given him; but, seeing that Laurent did not waver in his resolution, he exclaimed in anger: "If you wish to have your head cut off it shall be done." And calling one of his savage attendants, he ordered him to be decapitated.

The sacred relics of this glorious martyr of Jesus Christ have not yet been discovered. Some say that they were buried; others, on the contrary, assert that they were cast upon the highway. But what of this! God will know where to find them, and will one day glorify the body which suffered so gloriously for Him. It was only five days since this holy champion of the faith had been regenerated in the sacred waters of baptism; he had then received the name of the holy martyr Laurent, whose constancy he was destined to imitate so well. And even as his holy patron desired not to be separated from St. Sixtus when walking to execution, so Laurent Pé-Mou desired never to be separated from his dear father in the faith, M. Chapdelaine. Like him he faced the fury of tyrants without shrinking; like him, his soul, purified and beautified by the blood he so nobly shed, was united to the glorious army of martyrs and shares in their glory for all eternity. The execution of the young Agnes

followed that of Laurent Pé-Mou. But before relating the triumph of this young heroine, we must say a few words about her early years.

Born in 1833, in the province of Kouei-Tcheou, the daughter of a poor old Christian doctor, Agnes Tsaou-Kong was remarkable from her tenderest years for her deep piety and her faithful practice of all Christian virtues. At the age of fifteen she became an orphan, and being thus deprived of all help she was provided for by the charity of the missionaries of the province, who sent her to school, where she made remarkable progress in the writing and reading of Chinese books. The following year she was married to a Christian, who died four years afterward, and left the young Agnes poor and without any support, but ever devout and perfectly resigned to the holy will of God. In the mean time the province of Quang-Si received the faith, and, the number of neophytes rapidly increasing, by the entreaty of M. Chapdelaine this young woman was sent to him in order to instruct persons of her own sex in the Christian faith. Agnes acquitted herself perfectly of the charge entrusted to her. Of a tried virtue, gentle, patient, always contented with her lot, whatever it might be, she thought of nothing but gaining souls to God and directing them in the ways of salvation. Thus she prepared herself by the practice of the duties of her position to enter into the lists of the heroines of the faith, and to fight the glorious combats of the Church of God. Being seized on the 24th of February, doubtless because she had distinguished herself from others by her courage, she was chained and led before the judge, who tried by a thousand means to shake her constancy; but Agnes showed herself ever invincible in faith. Neither the promises, the menaces, nor the maledictions with which the brutal mandarin attacked her, nor the prospect of the torments which awaited her could shake her resolution to belong entirely to God and to remain faithful to Him till the last moment of her life. Among the different interrogations which the mandarin addressed to her, the following were especially noted as showing the calm simplicity of her soul:

"Whence do you come?"

"From Kouei-Tcheou, of Hyn-y-Fou."

"Who taught you the Christian religion?"

"My parents, who were always Christians. Afterward I was sent to school, where I learned to read a little."

"Why are you come here?"

"Two years ago, a great number of persons in this country hav

ing embraced the Christian faith, I came to teach the women and young girls to pray and to serve God."

"Why do you teach them to steal like the birds?"

"I do not teach them to steal but to pray. The mandarin knows well that that is a calumny invented against us."

"Why do you instruct them in the night instead of in the day?"

"Because in the day they are at work, but in the evening they are free."

"Tell me," he added without even attempting to hide his venality, "how much money has the teacher Ma?"

"I do not know."

He asked several other questions, and concluded by saying: "If you do not renounce the religion of your teacher Ma, you shall die."

"Cause me to die if such be your will, but I will never renounce the religion of the teacher Ma, since his is the religion of the God of heaven!"

"How would you choose to die?"

"In the same manner as our teacher Ma." The mandarin consented to her choice and had a cage prepared for her immediately, similar to that of the missionary, and of which we shall presently give a description. She entered it on the 28th of February at the same time as Père Chapdelaine. Separated by a little distance, they could see, but could not speak to each other; a touching circumstance for these two martyrs of Jesus, who, devoted to the same work, were tried by the same torments, and had the hope of going together to receive the same reward. After having passed four days in the midst of this cruel torture, this holy martyr, consumed by hunger and thirst, shattered and mutilated, commended her spirit into the hands of her Creator, and went to receive from Jesus her Lord the glorious crown of martyrdom. It seems probable that her body was buried, but the place where it reposes has not yet been discovered. Let us hope that God will one day permit it to be restored to the veneration of the faithful.

Lastly, after having contemplated with his own eyes the combats of his generous neophytes, it was just that the priest of Jesus Christ, the apostle of the faith, should in his turn appear upon the scene, and give proof of the courage with which divine grace had filled his soul. Interrogated first as to his religion, the venerable Chapdelaine replied as he was bound to do, but the mandarin, then proceeding to ask insolent questions, such as these: "How much money have you?

Why do you teach your sectarians to steal?" the missionary, either because he did not clearly understand the mandarin, as some have thought, or because he desired to imitate Our Lord Jesus Christ before Herod, was silent, and answered nothing to his invectives. The angry judge ordered him to receive a hundred stripes on the cheek with murderous leathern thongs, a single stroke of which was sufficient to cover the face with blood; so that these hundred blows, administered with all the force that vengeance and fanaticism give, knocked out the teeth and broke the jaw of the glorious martyr. Being thus wholly unable to speak and to answer, they made him lie down and gave him three hundred strokes more upon the back. During these horrible tortures he uttered no murmurs nor the least complaint, so that the mandarin and those who were with him were overcome with wonder and astonishment: for it is the custom of malefactors in China when undergoing punishment to groan loudly and continuously, and to implore the mandarin to pardon them; but this holy confessor, united heart and soul to his suffering Lord, could endure the most cruel torments without betraying with his lips the agony which overwhelmed him. The mandarin, attributing such extraordinary silence to the art of magic, caused a dog to be killed, and his blood to be sprinkled over the martyr's body; after that they continued to strike him without counting the blows, until they saw that he was incapable of moving; then they carried him back to prison as it was impossible to make him walk. But O compassionate goodness of God! behold, an instant afterward he rose and began to walk as he had done in perfect health. The guards, who were witnesses of this miracle, approached and asked him how it was that he could walk now when an instant before he could not move? The father replied, smiling: "It is God who has protected and blessed me!" Surely nothing more was needed to prove the innocence of the generous martyr of Jesus Christ; but these blind and furious men, seeing in this new miracle only another reason to believe in his magical power, caused a repast to be served to him consisting of those viands which in that country are accounted unclean, so as to destroy in him the effect of his enchantments. As he knew that those who practise secret arts have a horror of such dishes and regard them as an antidote to their mysterious practices, he partook of all to prove that he belonged to no secret or proscribed sect, but in very small quantities, and this was the only food that was offered him from the moment of his arrest until the time when he was admitted to the divine banquet that awaited him above, the mandarin

having forbidden, under penalty of death, that anything whatever should be given him.

The holy martyr was now condemned to death, and was enclosed, opposite to Agnes, as we have before said, in a wooden cage exposed to the burning sun. There they placed him. His hands were tied behind his back, his head passed through a hole, so that he was almost suspended by the neck, his feet scarcely touching the bottom of the cage. The savage guards watched him night and day. . . . Agnes died on the fourth day. The holy missionary did not succumb until the day following. As soon as he was dead, his guards cut his body in pieces, and took out his heart, which they ate after having fried it in a frying-pan.

His holy body has never been found. Only the head of the martyr is in possession of the Christians. Cut off from the body and placed in a little cage, it was suspended to the branches of a tree by the tress of hair which the Chinese always keep on the top of the head and allow to grow to its full length. After a fortnight this tress broke and remained attached to the branch, from which it was taken by the faithful and sent to Paris to the Chapel of the Martyrs. The head, stripped of the flesh, was for some time the object of the outrages and cruel games of the infidel children, who rolled it in the sand. It was at last removed by hands more worthy, and reverently placed in a secret spot. Pius IX. declared the martyr Auguste Chapdelaine venerable, and commanded that the process of his beatification should be commenced.

Such is the abridged recital of the cruel and admirable martyrdom inflicted by the Chinese in our own days upon a Catholic priest whom France had the honor to give to the world and to the Church. Let us hope that this new saint will remember, among the divine joys of the celestial country, the sorrows and necessities of the country that was his below, and that he will obtain for us, as well as for the companions of his triumph, the benedictions of God, which alone can restore faith to the world and arrest the destructive torrent of impiety!

MARTYRDOM OF THE YOUNG POLISH PRIEST, STANISLAUS ISZORA.

The first and principal cause of the implacable hatred of the Russians against Poland is that Poland is Catholic. Schism is still more bitter in its bigotry than heresy. Many times during a cen

tury the Russian schism has torn Poland in pieces and covered her with blood, hoping to destroy her altogether—first under the celebrated and detestable Empress Catharine, the friend of Voltaire; then under the Czar Nicholas I., of terrible memory; lastly, in our own days, cruelties and massacres, worthy of the ancient Cæsars, have decimated Poland, and governors, generals, and Russian priests burn, torture, and cover with blood and ruins the faithful nation which would rather die than apostatize.

The Catholic priests have been, even as in the primitive ages of the Church, the principal objects of the persecution. One among them, still quite young (he was only thirty years of age), rendered to his faith and to his glorious country the testimony of his blood. This was the young Abbé Stanislaus Iszora, the descendant of an ancient and noble race, martyred at Wilna, in Lithuania, the 3d of June, 1863.

Stanislaus Iszora, after his ecclesiastical studies and his promotion to the priesthood, had been sent as assistant priest to the venerable curé of Zoludko, in the district of Lida. In order to preserve peace and concord between the peasants and the proprietors of Zoludko, he had read from the pulpit a declaration from the Polish lords and proprietors conceding to the peasants the lands which they had hitherto cultivated as farmers, thus paralyzing the perfidious plots of the schismatics, who attributed to the Catholic nobles all manner of perverse designs, in order to stir up the people against them and to sow division among the Poles. The Abbé Iszora, having learned that the ferocious Murawieff, the new Russian Governor of Varsovia, had issued against him an order of arrest as a rebel to the laws, concealed himself, and joined a number of poor Poles, fugitives like himself, wandering in the woods. He became their chaplain. The authorities, failing to find him, seized in his stead the curé of the parish, an infirm old man entirely innocent of the act laid to the charge of his assistant priest. But he, in order to deliver the vennerable prisoner, left his unfortunate companions, and came of his own free will to place himself in the hands of the Russians. It should be remarked that it was before the 1st of May, before the term fixed by the imperial amnesty, that he surrendered himself a prisoner; and although his object was not to obtain pardon for himself nor to profit by the amnesty, but to restore liberty to his curé detained on his account, he ought none the less, according to the terms of the edict, to have been pardoned and set at liberty. But the justice of Russia is schismatic; she does not willingly let her

prey escape. Entirely regardless of the treaty of amnesty, they kept the Abbé Iszora in prison and brought him before a military commission, which pronounced upon him the sentence of death. Wazimow, the Governor of Poland before Murawieff, commuted this punishment to five years' exile in Siberia, and Murawieff tore up the letters of pardon and arbitrarily revived the sentence of death. The dean of Wilna was desired to go to the prison on the 3d of June at six in the morning to confess the Abbé Stanislaus Iszora. He found him confined in a cell with the Abbé Szyrwid, curé of Wasilew. The young priest at the sight of the dean rose in haste, and threw himself on the neck of his old professor of the academy. Understanding the object of this early visit, he entreated the dean to attend first to the Abbe Szyrwid, a priest much advanced in years. "As for me," he said, "I am young; I trust I shall have courage to suffer, sustained by the hope of the future prosperity of my country." The dean having replied that he was sent to him alone, he prepared himself for confession, and received the Sacrament of Penance with the greatest fervor. The dean having fulfilled his mission, and unwilling to believe that the execution was near at hand, left the prisoner, promising to come again to see him. Crossing the prison-yard he met an old septuagenarian, who asked him if it were true that the Abbé Iszora was going to be shot. This was the father of the prisoner, whose paternal heart was filled with presentiments as to the fate of his son. The dean replied that he knew absolutely nothing. This conversation attracted the Cossack General Szamszow. He inquired of the dean if he had confessed the prisoner and given him communion.

"I received no order to take him communion," was the reply.

"Then lose no time in doing so," answered the General.

The dean returned to Abbé Iszora's cell, and told him that he had been desired to bring him the Holy Communion.

"I well understand the reason," said the young priest; "I am ready to drink the chalice to the dregs. Only tell me if I am to be shot, or to die on the gallows; hide nothing from me, I am prepared for anything."

The dean replied with emotion: "I take God to witness that I know nothing. But do not disturb yourself. Only think of preparing yourself to receive Our Lord."

"That is what I desire to do," replied the prisoner.

Half an hour afterward the dean administered to him the Holy Communion, which he received with angelic fervor. The hour

which followed was passed in conversation between the young martyr and his confessor. The Abbé Iszora was more tranquil than the dean, and tried to cheer him. Suddenly the door opened, and the keeper of the prison, addressing himself to the condemned, only uttered one word—"Come!" The two priests rose, and before going out the Abbé Iszora slipped secretly into the hand of his confessor a sum of sixteen roubles (this was all he possessed) to be distributed among the poor. They found in the prison-yard a numerous escort, in the midst of which they were placed, and they turned to the faubourg where the execution was to take place. The journey lasted more than an hour. Whoever (wrote an eye-witness) has seen Stanislaus Iszora walking to his death, surrounded by his executioners, with perfect serenity and wonderful tranquillity of mind, will never forget this touching spectacle, and will ask God to grant him the same faith and the same courage when his last hour shall come. The young priest was agreeable and distinguished in appearance, with a fair, fresh complexion and blue eyes. His serene, smiling face showed the calmness and resignation of his soul. He wore a cassock, and walked on foot. He passed through an immense crowd of people, who watched him with eyes full of tears. During the whole time he showed not the least sign of weakness or apprehension; his expression was calm and serious. To see him advancing thus, reciting with his companion priest the prayers of the Church, one would have said that he was going to render the last offices to a deceased brother, while they were the prayers of his own agony which he was reciting, his own funeral escort which he was himself conducting.

The market-place was crowded with peasants; the whole population of Wilna seemed there. The soldiers of the escort had much trouble to clear a passage through the crowd to reach the circle formed by the cavalry and infantry round the fatal stake. The Abbé Iszora bowed with a smile to the commissaries who awaited him at the foot of the stake, and advanced toward them with the same even step. After the reading of the sentence he knelt down to pray, received absolution from his confessor, then rose, gave his benediction to the people, whose sobs and cries of indignation he heard, and tenderly, embracing the priest who assisted him, entreated him to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice for his intention. He, his eyes bathed in tears, embraced him in his turn with affection, and, giving him the cross to kiss: "We will pray for you," he said, "but it is rather you who should pray for us in the heaven you are about to

enter." The Abbe Stanislaus then kissed the cross, restored it to his confessor, pressing his hand for the last time, and delivered himself up to his executioners. They bound him to the stake. He asked to die with his face uncovered. This they refused. He was then obliged to submit to being enveloped in a long veil which covered him to the feet. It was still the dean of Wilna who put on him this funeral sheet. But before the accomplishment of this formality which was to shut the earth from his sight forever, the holy priest raised toward heaven a radiant face, already bright with the glory of the heavenly abode whose gates were even now opening to receive him. Then twelve soldiers advanced, and a volley was immediately heard. Groans resounded from all present, but the victim gave no cry and made no movement; he was living still. In Russia they do not kill with the first shots; so prompt a death would seem too sweet; they torture the victim with successive volleys, which inflict terrible wounds and thus prolong the agony.

After the first discharge, which had no fatal result, General Szamszow, who commanded the troops, perceived that the eyes of the soldiers who were firing were blinded with tears. He approached to reprimand them. But their emotion communicated itself to him, and, a thing rare for a Cossack, he was moved himself, and could only make a sign to them to fire again. They therefore reloaded, took their aim at the head and at the heart, and shot once more. A fresh cry of horror came from the lips of the multitude. The Abbé Iszora fell forward, and would have fallen to the ground but for the bonds which fastened him to the stake. He was dead.

The soldiers immediately possessed themselves of his clothes, and threw his body into a grave which had been dug beforehand near the place of execution. This grave was filled with earth and with lime, and the horses of the Cossacks were ridden over the spot several times, so that no trace should be left, and the troops retired at once from the place. Then the grief and indignation of the crowd broke forth, and more than one voice was heard to exclaim: "God will avenge the death of the martyr!" After this sad execution, the father of the young Polish martyr became mad and the mother died of grief.

KIND ACTIONS ARE NEVER UNREWARDED.

THE celebrated Doctor Dupuytren, one of the most famous French surgeons, hid a kind heart beneath a rough exterior. In the following facts we may see that it was to a charitable action that he doubt

less owed the greatest grace of his life, the greatest that God can grant a man, that of dying a holy Christian death.

One day a priest entered the great surgeon's consulting-room. He had a timid, hesitating manner, was poorly if not shabbily dressed, and had a mild and gentle expression. Dupuytren recognized him at once as the village curé. He asked him in his usual rough manner what he wanted; and the good curé explained in a few words that he was priest of a little parish in the diocese of Versailles, that he was suffering from a wen on the head, and that, by the entreaties of his parishioners, he had come to ask him to examine it and to tell him of a remedy. Dupuytren just glanced at the seat of the disease, touched it, and said to the poor priest:

"It would be of no use for you to come again, I can do nothing; the disease is incurable."

The good curé rose, asked the doctor to excuse the trouble he had given him, and moved quietly away, saying half to himself: "My poor parishioners will be very grieved!"

Dupuytren, struck by the calmness of his manner and by his simple unselfish reflection, roughly recalled him, made another and a more careful examination, and said:

"If you like to come on Thursday to the Hôtel Dieu, I will attempt a doubtful operation which may save you if it succeed."

"I shall be at the Hôtel Dieu on Thursday morning," replied the curé, and he took leave of the doctor.

On Thursday, at the time appointed, Dupuytren arrived at the hospital, and the first face that he perceived was that of the village curé. He went up to him at once, asked him if he were ready to submit to the painful operation that might save him, and, on the reply of the priest in the affirmative, made the usual preparations. The students who surrounded him remarked that his face, instead of wearing its usually impassive expression, was a little agitated, and that his hand shook as he selected the instrument proper for the operation.

As he was about to begin, the doctor told two of his assistants to hold the patient; but the holy priest, raising his eyes toward him, said quietly and firmly: "It is unnecessary, doctor; I shall not move." And he did not move, but during the whole of the operation, while his blood was flowing fast beneath the surgeon's steel, he remained motionless, his eyes fixed upon the image of his crucified Saviour.

When the operation was ended, Dupuytren pressed the hand of the courageous ecclesiastic with an emotion which he did not attempt

to conceal, and left the bedside as pale as the patient himself. The next day he returned, took off the bandages, appeared satisfied, and said to the priest:

"It is going on well; your life is saved."

The good curé raised his eyes to heaven, took the doctor's hands in his, and said:

"I thank you for my poor parishioners, monsieur; they will be very happy and will pray to God for you."

A few days after the worthy curé, completely cured, left the hospital and returned to his dear parish.

The following summer Dupuytren saw him enter his study once more, holding a basket in his hand. This time he went forward at once to meet the good priest, and received him with visible pleasure. The poor curé brought to his preserver a present from his parishioners—the first fruits of their humble gardens. The doctor received this touching proof of gratitude with emotion, and the curé left him with a light heart, carrying his empty basket.

Many years passed by, and Dupuytren seemed to have forgotten the village curé; but the calm, grave face, so full of gentleness, was deeply engraven on his heart; and there it still remained, thanks be to God, when the moment of his death drew near. When, by the aid of that professional skill which had so rarely deceived him, he perceived with certainty that his last hour was approaching, Dupuytren remembered that there was a God to whom he must render an account of his works, and he remembered also that, engaged in the service of his God, there was a holy, humble priest to whom he had formerly rendered a service and who had promised not to forget him. Then he hesitated no longer, but sent for the poor village curé. A few hours after the good priest was at his pillow, now assisting in his turn him who had formerly done him such good service, and bringing him, in exchange for the life of the body which the skilful surgeon had preserved, the life of the soul with its eternal hopes. Dupuytren humbly confessed, received the sacraments of the Church with faith and love, and died peacefully in the arms and with the benediction of the venerable curé.

It was thus that God rewarded him for his good work, and thus the divine words of infinite mercy and goodness were once more accomplished: "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, amen I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

A LITTLE CANDLE TO MARY.

Two poor old people, husband and wife, lived with much difficulty in a miserable little garret, for which they paid twenty francs a year. They often went to bed without any supper, and their breakfast very often consisted of a few hard crusts soaked in water. They could not bear to make their poverty known and ask for relief. Once they had lived in comfort, but little by little they had sold everything. One Saturday they found themselves left without a penny, without a morsel of bread or food of any description. The wife was very infirm, the husband was sick and obliged to keep his bed. The day was passed in suffering, and when the night came they had eaten nothing. They wept and they prayed. The Sunday which followed was still more terrible. In the evening positive want drove the poor old woman forth with the intention of asking help; but when she tried to speak shame prevented her, and she returned to her room more exhausted and discouraged than before. For forty-eight hours they had eaten nothing. Their faces were pale and wan, their strength was almost gone.

"We must die, my poor wife," said the old man; "God has forsaken us."

The poor old woman did not answer. But a little time after she raised her head, and cried, as though struck with a sudden inspiration:

"Let us invoke the Blessed Virgin! She is the comforter of the afflicted and the refuge of those who suffer. She will deliver us. Wait," she added, "I have one little candle left. We will light it before her image; Mary will come to our aid."

The unfortunate people, reanimated by this last hope, rose with difficulty, and in the midst of the darkness of the night they found the candle, lighted it, and, placing it before a little statue of the Blessed Virgin, which had found no purchasers because it had no material value, they knelt down, and, leaning against each other, called to their aid her who is never, we are told, invoked in vain.

They wept bitterly. . . .

A workwoman who lived opposite, in the same street, had a sick child. She got up in the middle of the night to give it something to drink, and looking out of the window perceived the light in the little window of her two poor neighbors. She knew them a little, as they always spoke to each other when they met

"Can those poor people be ill then?" she wondered. And urged by some instinct she put on her things, took a lantern, and went in to see them. She pushed open the door, and a heart-rending sight met her eyes. The two poor old people, gasping for breath and reduced to the last extremity, were rather prostrate than kneeling before the image of the Mother of the Saviour.

Then they acknowledged their pressing want.

The charitable neighbor hastened home immediately to fetch them broth and bread, and other little provisions. She comforted and ministered to them. The following day she went to tell the curé and the president of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Both came at once to these unfortunate people, and kindly reproaching them for not having sent to them before, gave them immediate help, to be followed soon by more substantial assistance.

A few days after, as a crowning blessing, a little heritage came to them from a distant relation, and thus, forever secured from poverty, they relate to all who care to hear it the truly miraculous assistance which they received from the Blessed Virgin Mary. Without the little candle, or rather without that confidence in Mary which suggested to them the pious idea of burning it before her image, the kind neighbor would not have come to their aid, and they would have died of want before the arrival of the heritage.

THE LITTLE EUCHOLOGY.

(*By an Officer in Retreat.*)

In 1851 I was living at Paris. I was returning home one evening, stopping from time to time before the handsome shops where the rich merchandise of the capital tempts the passers-by at every step.

At a window full of second-hand books which I had been turning over half mechanically, I suddenly bought, scarcely knowing why, a little Euchology hidden in the midst of a heap of worthless books. I had never had a work of this kind in my house before. I had always looked upon its contents as useless and unprofitable reading. Nevertheless I bought it, I repeat, scarcely thinking what I did. Returning home, I went to bed, but before falling asleep I took up my new acquisition and opened the pages at hazard. My eyes fell, not by chance, for there is no such thing as chance, but by the infinite mercy of God, upon the evening prayer. It began thus:—

"**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen**

"**Let us place ourselves in the presence of God and adore Him**

"O my God, I adore Thee with that entire submission with which the presence of Thy sovereign greatness inspires me. I believe in Thee because Thou art the very truth. I hope in Thee because Thou art infinitely good. I love Thee with my whole heart because Thou art worthy of all love, and for Thy sake I love my neighbor as myself.

"Let us return thanks to God for all His benefits.

"O my God, how can I thank Thee for all the graces and blessings I have received from Thee. Thou hast thought of me from all eternity. Thou hast drawn me out of nothingness, and Thou hast given Thy life to redeem me; and day by day Thou dost crown me yet again with Thy infinite mercy and goodness. Alas, my Lord! what can I render to Thee in return for Thy goodness?"

These simple, earnest words, so consoling, and yet so impressive, had an almost incredible effect upon me. The tears rose to my eyes, and a peace unknown until that day filled my heart. This was the first time for many years that I had realized that which all the world is seeking—a little true happiness. The next morning I opened my book again. The morning prayer touched my heart as the evening prayer had done the night before; and I felt myself urged by a secret force that I could not resist to go to church. I knelt down in a corner, and there I began to pray, or, more truly, to weep. In truth I cannot tell what passed within me. I had no distinct thought, but God touched my soul. . . . I commenced to be a Christian. I had a glimpse of a new life, and of a world, as it were, until then unknown. I remained in this state of transition for many weeks. I prayed in secret, not daring as yet to allow the change which had come over me to be perceived by my friends, nor even by my wife and children. I felt that this was a weakness; nevertheless, human respect held me back. But regret for my past life grew stronger within me every day. On the other hand, I shrank from the prospect of confession with fear. This acknowledgment, so salutary, but at the same time so painful, when many years have been passed far away from God, only presented itself to my mind under its most severe and humiliating aspect. But happily for me, God was the stronger, and one day I summoned all my courage and made a resolution.

In the evening I entered the church, the way to which was now happily familiar, and requested a priest who was just leaving it to listen to me for an instant. He heard me with a kindness which touched my heart, and soon after I was kneeling at his feet, violently torn by the shame of all I had to say, and the happiness which would result from this acknowledgment. I desired, and yet I did not desire, and I knew not how or where to begin. The good priest helped me, questioned me, drew from me the confession of all my sins,

softening the humiliation with a mercy which was wholly paternal, and encouraging me to hope. It was thirty-two years since I had fulfilled any religious duty. My repentance was deep and sincere. I received with unspeakable consolation that merciful pardon which Our Lord gives to all His prodigal children by the ministry of His priests, and which restores to us the lost glory of our innocence. "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," said the Son of God, and I now heard one who was the depositary of this divine power pronounce above my head these words of life and resurrection: "I absolve thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

I shall never forget that solemn moment, nor the charitable, compassionate ministry which was to me the instrument of the mercy of God: "Go in peace," said my confessor with emotion, when the sentence was pronounced; "Go in peace, my child, and sin no more, but remain henceforward faithful to your Saviour." From that time I have been a Christian. I glory in a faith and in a life which preserves me from evil, which raises me above my passions, and causes me to fulfil my duties with facility and joy. I believe, I hope, I love. I pray, I confess, and I communicate. Let him who is not happy, and yet desires to be, do as much as this. And let him open the Prayer Book which he has, perhaps, long laid aside; let him read, as I read, the morning and the evening prayers. I trust that they will lead him where I myself was led.

A MISTAKE.

At Douai, in Flanders, there lived a good priest whose whole life was absorbed in works of unceasing benevolence and piety. From the religious care of the soldiers, whom he loved as a father, he went on to care for all the poor and destitute who came within his reach. He sought them out in street and garret. He gave them all that he possessed, and, what is better far than alms, he brought to them the help and consolations of religion, peace of conscience, and gladness of heart.

One evening in the December of 1855, after a long and busy day he returned to his humble dwelling, and rested from his apostolic labors while reciting the divine office. There was a knock at the door. He opened it, and perceived a little girl, who entreated him to come as quickly as possible to a poor lady who was dying, and who lived in Rue ——, No. 28.

The good priest was anxious to go at once with the child to the house named, but the little messenger said that it was not so urgent as that, but that she only came to ask him not to put off his visit till the next day in case of death. He then wrote down the address, and sent the child back to say that he was coming.

When he had ended the recitation of his office he set out at once, regardless of the fast-falling rain and the bitter coldness of the night. A soul was to be saved, one in sorrow and suffering was to be comforted; with such an end in view what were cold and rain? On reaching the street the child had named, the priest went into No. 18, convinced that that was the number which had been given him. It was a very poor and humble dwelling. The priest went softly up the staircase and knocked at the first door he came to. A man opened it, and, perceiving some one in the garb of an ecclesiastic, greeted him with a burst of angry abuse, and replied insultingly and in the negative to the inquiry of the priest if there were any one sick in the room, and then shut the door in his face.

Meek and patient like his divine Master, the good priest went quietly away and knocked at another door, where he met with no better success. He then went up to the second story, where he found a litle boy on the landing.

"My child," he said, "could you tell me the room of a poor lady who is living in this house, and who is very ill? Her name is Madame G——."

"In that room down there at the end of the passage there is a poor lady who is very ill, Monsieur le Curé; father said she would not live through the night; but I do not think it is the name you said."

"Never mind the name, but show me the door, my child."

And the little boy led the way. The priest opened the door and entered the room. Near to a bed on which was stretched an evidently dying woman there was seated a man of about fifty years of age. He rose immediately and seemed astonished at the sight of the priest, who greeted him kindly, and asked how his poor wife was —"for this is doubtless your wife, and you are Monsieur G——."

"I? nothing of the kind!" replied the owner of the room indignantly. "Who sent you here, pray, to meddle with our affairs."

"But some one came for me," replied the priest, greatly astonished. "They told me that some poor Madame G—— was dying, and desired to receive the last sacraments without delay. If I have mistaken the street, or the house, or the room, it seems to me, at least, that the poor lady here has no less need of my holy min

istry. God has doubtless led me here, and has permitted this mistake."

"Yes, yes, Father, it was God who led you here," murmured the weak voice of the dying woman.

"Nothing of the kind," exclaimed the husband. "It is more than ten years since a priest has stepped foot into my house, and you shall not hear my wife's confession; she belongs to me, and you may attend to your own concerns."

"You are mistaken, Monsieur," said the priest gently yet firmly. "Your wife belongs to God before belonging to you, and you have no right over her soul. If she desires to confess, I will hear her confession; and it is my duty not to forsake her until, by her own will, she shall refuse my ministry."

Then approaching the sick woman, he asked:

"Do you desire to be reconciled to God and to die a Christian death?"

The poor woman clasped her hands and began to weep for joy. "I thank God for this," she said. "For many days I have entreated my husband to call in a priest, and he would not. I desire to make my peace with God, who has had pity upon me."

"You hear this, Monsieur," said the priest, now turning to the husband. "Be so good as to leave me alone for some moments with your poor wife."

These words were spoken with so much firmness and resolution that the man was forced to retire, which he did, muttering angrily.

"See, Father, what has saved me," said the dying woman, weeping and pointing out to the priest a rosary hanging from her bed. "I have been weak enough to fear my husband more than God, and to avoid quarrels I have neglected all my religious duties for ten or eleven years; but I have never ceased to commend myself to the Blessed Virgin. Every day I have said a decade of my rosary, and I have always had a devotion to the Blessed Mother of God. It is she, Father, who has brought you to me; it is she who has interceded for my poor soul!"

Deeply touched, the good priest consoled the sick woman, helped her in her confession, absolved her from her sins, and told her, on leaving, to prepare herself as well as she could to receive the holy viaticum and extreme unction, which he was going to bring from a neighboring parish. On leaving he almost insisted on shaking hands with the husband, who returned in great discontent to his happy wife. The good Father now searched in his note-book for the

address of the sick person who had sent for him, and found that instead of being No. 18 it was No. 28. While thanking God for this happy mistake, he hastened to the other house, where he found the sick woman who was really expecting him. He heard her confession, then without loss of time went to wake the sacristan of the parish, and, taking the Blessed Sacrament with the holy oils, returned to his two sick penitents; but when he reached No. 18 the poor woman had just expired. She had received the pardon of her sins in sacramental absolution, and the fervor of her good will had, doubtless, supplied in the eyes of a God of mercy for those other aids which the priest was bringing her.

Full of faith and gratitude toward the Blessed Virgin the refuge of sinners, the consolatrix of the afflicted, the priest of God administered to his other sick penitent the last sacraments of the Church; and it was he who himself related to me this touching adventure. It is but another instance which helps to prove how great are the treasures of benediction which spring from devotion to Mary, and how merciful Jesus is to those who love His Mother.

FILIAL PIETY.

In a very small house in a poor neighborhood of Paris lived a family deserving of interest from their poverty and misfortunes. It consisted of five persons, the father and mother and three boys, of whom the eldest was scarcely fifteen. He was a young apprentice. I shall not give his name nor the calling in which he had been employed for three years, but shall merely say that at the workshops where he was engaged every one loved him; not only his companions, but his master, because he was kind and obliging to the former, respectful and submissive to the latter. At the patronage* he was cited as a model of goodness; while in his own home he seemed like the guardian angel of the house. But it yet remained to be seen to how great an extent his filial piety would carry him.

For three months the father of our young apprentice had been ill and out of work; the little savings of the summer were gradually dwindling away; at last they were left without even a penny in the house.

This was during the long days of winter. One evening at five o'clock, the young apprentice, returning from the workshop, found

* The *patronage* is a house where the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul receive a certain number of apprentices and young workmen every Sunday

his old father quite broken down, his mother weeping, and his two little brothers in a distant corner sobbing for sympathy. Louis quickly perceived the reason of this grief. There was no bread in the house, and the poor mother was suffering less for herself than for her children. What could he do? What would become of them?

After a moment's silence, the astonished family perceived that Louis was putting on an old blouse over his usual dress, and directly after he went out, saying that he should be gone about two or three hours, but that he should bring back some bread, as he knew how to get some. He spoke with so much confidence, and the need was so pressing, that they let him go without further question.

It was nearly midnight when the young apprentice returned, but he came bringing the bread that was so much needed. They question him, they regard him with astonishment. Where has he been? What has he done? If chance or business had occasioned you to leave your home that evening, you would perhaps have met upon your road a young man in a blouse, searching among the heaps of rubbish near the houses and handsome shops which adorn the streets of Paris, and picking up the paper and rags which are thrown out in the evening. . . . You might have seen him, and have taken him for one of the lazy young vagrants who are led by idleness to adopt this miserable calling. But you would have been greatly mistaken. For this young man was Louis. It had been at no little cost to his self-love, but he trampled this under foot, and, remembering that nothing is shameful or humiliating excepting that which offends God, he set himself diligently to work.

And God had blessed his honest efforts, and had given him an abundant harvest, and thus the means to provide bread for his starving family. And thus the boy returned home happily, and if any feeling of shame ever rose in his mind at the remembrance of that night of humiliation, it should have found no place within his breast. He had ministered to his father, and comforted his mother; and I would only wish that all his life might be as noble as that night of deep distress, and could I see the blouse that covered him, and the old rags that he collected, I would regard them as a badge of honor bravely won.

FIRST COMMUNION.

NAPOLEON I. was talking familiarly one day with many of his illustrious companions in arms. They were all discussing which had been the happiest day of their lives, and one after another they

named those battles synonymous throughout the world with honor and glory—Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, and Wagram. The Emperor had grown thoughtful, and had ceased to join in the conversation. One of the officers present took the liberty of interrupting his reverie: "And you, Sire," he asked, "which has been the happiest day of your life? Among so many triumphal days, your Majesty is doubtless troubled to choose." "The happiest day of my life," replied the great Emperor in a serious voice, "was the day of my first communion."

The Emperor was right. Next to the day of death, when the Christian is released forever from the sorrows of life, and enters into a blissful eternity, the happiest day of life is undoubtedly the day of our first communion. What happiness can be deeper, what joy more pure and sweet, than the happiness and joy of the child who draws near to the holy altar, with innocence in the soul, peace in the heart, and tears in the eyes? What memory can be compared to the memory of those days of preparation when we disposed ourselves by fervent prayers and by perfect good will to receive Jesus our blessed Lord for the first time into our hearts? Could anything ever equal the peaceful and deep emotion which filled our souls when, after having received absolution from the priest, we went to kneel down at our father's and mother's feet to ask them to give us their blessing and to forgive us for all our past offences? And our waking on that happy morning, so long expected! and the unclouded splendor of that great religious solemnity in which we were with Jesus first of all! and the beautiful canticles which will never cease to echo in our ears, and which seem to speak to us in the very depths of our hearts and whisper how much God loves us, and how truly we should love Him.

The first communion is indeed a festival in which the whole family takes part. The blessing of God enters into the house with the dear little children all radiant with innocence. May that divine benedic tion ever rest upon their home; and, in order to preserve it, parents should watch carefully over those little ones who are the angels of the house, that they may not lose that which renders them so dear to the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Piety is not only the surety of the life that is to come, but is, moreover, the only guarantee of earthly happiness.

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN MARY.

WHILE I was at Rome, in 1845, I had the happiness of making the acquaintance of a good and holy priest named Don Biaggio. He had just succeeded as Superior of the Society of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood to the venerable founder of the society, Gaspard del Bufalo, who had died in 1839, after a life which had been not only holy and apostolic, but resplendent with the glory of miracles.

Among other wonders which Don Biaggio related to me, and of which he had been the eye-witness and sometimes even the happy instrument, the following would doubtless interest my readers. I will relate it, as far as possible, in his own words:

"I was then twenty-three years of age," he said to me, "and it was in the year 1814. Pius VII. had just returned in triumph to his beloved Rome. From my childhood I had desired to become a priest, but work and study had insensibly impaired my health. I had, nevertheless, been able to ascend the first steps of the sanctuary; I was a deacon. The disease of the lungs from which I suffered had now rapidly developed; I was subject to an intermittent fever, and the doctors spoke most seriously of my case. I did not deceive myself as to the decline of my health, and with the probability of an early death I sought and obtained the favor of being ordained a priest one year before the canonical age. The fatigues of the examination and the retreat preparatory to my ordination exhausted the little strength which remained to me. I became seriously ill, and the doctors called in consultation informed me, after a careful examination, that I had reached the third degree of pulmonary consumption, that it was not possible I should recover, and that I had better make all necessary arrangements without delay. The Roman physicians are men of faith and do not follow the deplorable custom, prevalent in some countries, of letting people die without knowing that they are dying, and consequently without being able to prepare themselves to appear before God.

"I decided to go to Loretto and to die there under the eyes of the Blessed Virgin beneath the shadow of the *Santa Casa*. The voyage was painful, but for a dying man a little suffering more or less is of small consequence. Arrived at Loretto, I dragged myself to the Holy House, fervently entreating the Madonna to assist me in my last agony. I had been there a few days; my illness was increasing; one morning when I was feeling weaker than usual, I went early to

THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY.

CONSECRATION TO

The Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

JESUS! O Mary! It is at the foot of your altar, where the seraphs tremble and adore, that I consecrate myself forever, and without reserve, to your sacred hearts, to be with you one victim of love. Yes, I have sworn and decreed not to live but for your love and to make you beloved, and to die rather than offend you. I will show myself the generous child of the most generous of Saviours and of Mothers, and rival the generosity of angels, if possible. And as you have not called me to your service, O amiable hearts of Jesus and Mary, but in order to form me according to yourselves, under the shadow of your wings, may I be able to inflame the hearts of all by the fire of your divine love, or at least to make up, by the extent of my love, for the little love of others. And, at the end, may I expire in your arms, to consummate the union of my heart with your sacred hearts, in the delights of eternity. Amen.

ACTS OF PRAISE TO THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY

May the divine heart of Jesus and the immaculate heart of Mary be known, praised, blessed, worshipped, and glorified always, and in all places. Amen.

The Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VII., by a rescript of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, August 18th, 1807, granted:

AN INDULGENCE OF SIXTY DAYS, once a day, to those who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this prayer, together with the acts of praise to the SS. Hearts of Jesus and Mary.—*Raccolta, p. 228.*

the sacred sanctuary of our Blessed Mother. According to my custom I knelt down for an instant, leaning against the wall. . . . A young priest whom I did not know, whom I had never seen, came and knelt down near me. We were alone, or almost alone. He then said in a low voice, as though speaking of me, but with his eyes fixed upon the miraculous Madonna: '*Bisogna anchè che presto faccia la missione*'—'He also must give the mission.' I looked at him; it was evident that he was speaking of me. Therefore, still upon my knees, I answered: 'I would do so willingly if I could. . . . But I did not come here to preach; I am in consumption; I am come to die.' 'No, no,' replied the priest with a bright smile; 'let us have confidence in Mary!'—'*Abbiamo fede in Maria;*' and he added: '*Dite meco un*' '*Ave Maria*'—'Say an Ave Maria with me.' I repeated the angelical salutation with him, scarcely knowing what it all meant. . . .

"When we had finished, Gaspard del Bufalo (for it was he) rose, signed to me to follow him, and we went out together from the *Santa Casa* in silence. We crossed the great basilica in which the Holy House of Nazareth is enclosed like a relic, and when we had reached the outer square del Bufalo turned toward me with the look of one inspired. He told me that the Holy Father had entrusted to him the charge of giving a series of missions in this part in order to efface as far as possible the fatal effects of the Revolution, of Voltairianism, and of foreign occupation; that he desired to begin by Loretto in order to obtain the help and protection of the Blessed Virgin; but that he was still alone and needed companions. 'You will come with me,' he added with singular authority. We will commence the mission to-morrow; you shall preach at such an hour, I at another;' and there, upon the spot, he arranged the order of the services. I thought I was dreaming, I seemed to have been conscious of no kind of physical sensation, either during the Ave Maria or afterward.

"Subjugated by a secret force, and confiding in Mary, who can obtain everything from her divine Son, I made no objection; and the following morning, God and our Blessed Lady helping me, I began to give a series of missions with the servant of God, which continued almost without interruption during twenty-three or twenty-four years, up to the time of his holy, happy death. From that day I have never been ill; nor felt my lungs in the least degree affected."

Don Biaggio died also a few years after in the odor of sanctity. I received this account from his own lips.

OUR LADY OF VICTORIES.

Our Lady of Victories is the name given to a church in Paris, situated or rather hidden in one of the most commercial, most stirring, and least Christian quarters of that great town. This church, of very humble exterior, was even unknown to the Parisians themselves before the year 1836. It was certainly a parish church, but one without parishioners; and notwithstanding the efforts of good and earnest priests, not one man in the congregation fulfilled his Easter duties, no one ever came to the High Mass; and not more than fifteen or twenty women, out of seventeen thousand inhabitants, approached the sacraments!

To-day this little church is known throughout the world. Its very name causes Catholic hearts to beat, and that not only in France, but throughout Europe, in America, in Africa, and in those far-off islands where our missionaries carry the faith. Our Lady of Victories is a great religious centre for all pious souls in Paris and in the provinces; its nave is always full of fervent worshippers, and the church is so crowded that it is necessary to come a long time before the service in order to find a place.

What could have happened to effect so complete a change in such a few years? Listen, for the finger of God is there. The good curé of Our Lady of Victories, M. Desgenette, a man of eighty years of age, had had the charge of this unhappy parish during four years. Seeing that all his efforts to convert the souls entrusted by Providence to his care had been utterly useless, and in his humility attributing this want of success to his own unworthiness, he had been thinking for some time of resigning his mission into the hands of the Archbishop of Paris. One day, in the month of December, he commenced the Mass under the impression of this thought. An unusual disquietude oppressed his soul, so much so that on reading the Sanctus he was obliged to stop to arouse himself effectually from his preoccupation and to collect his thoughts. While he was thus seeking to gain peace within, no one being near him, a clear, distinct voice suddenly spoke these words: "Consecrate thy church and parish to the most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary!" The poor priest, utterly bewildered, took the voice for a delusion of his

troubled senses. "I am not only an unworthy curé," he said to himself, groaning in spirit, "but now I am losing my senses and am going mad. I must hesitate no longer, but must give up my mission without more delay." And, a little reassured by this determination, he ended the Holy Mass with calmness.

His thanksgiving was longer than usual. His trouble and preoccupation returned to him anew, and he strengthened himself in his determination to resign a charge of which he believed himself so evidently unworthy. He was kneeling alone in the choir. He was about to rise to return home and write at once to the Archbishop, when the same voice echoed in his ears once more, saying to him in accents of majesty and command: "Consecrate thy church and parish to the most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary!"

The holy priest, moved to the depths of his soul, could no longer doubt the reality of what had happened to him. He prostrated and humiliated himself, asked help from God, and invoked, in order to know what he must do, the most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, to which he had never had recourse until then, and of which he had spoken, as he afterward acknowledged with simplicity, as a singular devotion, impracticable and useless. After all, he said to himself, I may as well try.

And he did indeed try. Returning home, he wrote, with a facility he had never before experienced, the rules of a confraternity of Our Lady of Victories, in honor of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary. Wholly astonished himself at the strange rapidity with which he had been able to accomplish this work, he carried it to Monseigneur de Guélen of holy and revered memory, then Archbishop of Paris. He read the statutes, and not only authorized the curé to establish his new confraternity, but even insisted upon his doing so in the most imperative manner.

"You will commence next Sunday," he added. It was then Friday.

On the Sunday the good curé ascended the pulpit at the time of the sermon, and looking down upon his deserted church announced to the few women who composed his auditory that that very evening the meetings and religious services of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary would commence in that church.

On coming down from the pulpit, he was stopped by a man whom he had not seen when he went up, and who asked him when he could receive his confession? He was a rich merchant of the parish, with whom the curé was acquainted, but who never came to church. The good priest could but regard this unhoped-for conversion as a

sign from God to give him confidence, and to prove to him that his work came to him from heaven.

That evening when the curé, full of apprehension, entered his poor church, he was stupefied at seeing it filled with men, women, and young people in greater numbers than at any previous solemnity. He gave an instruction which was followed by the singing of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. When they reached the invocation, so dear to our hearts: "*Refugium peccatorum, ora pro nobis!*"—"Refuge of sinners, pray for us," an involuntary and supernatural emotion took possession of the whole assembly, who unanimously repeated three times over as one great cry of confidence and repentance: "*Refugium peccatorum, ora pro nobis.*" The curé, himself overcome by heartfelt emotion, admired the goodness of God, who thus changes the hearts and attracts the souls of men.

The Blessed Virgin, the refuge of sinners and the Mother of mercy, had made choice of a new sanctuary upon earth from which to shed over France and the whole world the graces of her divine Son. The Confraternity (since become an arch-confraternity) of Our Lady of Victories was founded, and from that day, not a month, not a week has passed without wonders of every description, sudden conversions of hardened sinners, evidently miraculous cures, graces of all kinds being sent to prove to the world that the arm of God is not shortened, and that the Blessed Virgin is always our Mother.

More than three million of the faithful, with our Holy Father at their head, are inscribed in the ranks of this admirable arch-confraternity, and wear upon their breasts, as a sign of gratitude and love, the medal named the Miraculous Medal, on account of the signal graces of which it has been the instrument.

Now, there is one thing all good Catholics may do every day, and it is this: they may commend their country to prayers that never grow cold, to a love that never grows weary, to a faith that can never grow tired; when the present seems dark and the future unpromising, and the number of God's faithful children comparatively small, then cast away all doubt and sadness, look up to heaven, and behold thy Mother. Her heart is full of love, her hands are clasped in ceaseless prayer; she is so near and dear to Jesus—therefore with hope and confidence, with joy and gratitude, confide all the friends whom you love and the land of your birth to the Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

VOLUME II.

Living in the Faith

GLORIOUS LESSONS AND GRAND EXAMPLES FROM TRUE SERVANTS OF THE CROSS

BY

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL GIBBONS AND OTHERS

Living and Dying in the Holy Faith Illustrated

And I live, now not I: but Christ liveth in me. And that I live now in the flesh: I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered himself for me.—*Gal. ii. 20.*

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord: or whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Therefore whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.—*Romans xiv. 7, 8.*

Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life.—*Apocalypse ii. 10.*

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of the testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens and you that dwell therein.—*Apocalypse xii. 11, 12.*

Blessed are they that wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb: that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.—*Apocalypse xxii. 14.*

Living in the Faith

LESSONS FROM THE CHURCH IN AMERICA.

Education of the Clergy—Pastoral Rights—Christian Education—The Christian Home—Christian Marriage—Home Virtues—Good Reading—The Holy Scriptures—The Catholic Press—The Lord's Day—Forbidden Societies—Catholic Societies—Home and Foreign Missions.

Weighty Words from His Eminence, James Cardinal Gibbons.

Full eighteen years have elapsed since our predecessors were assembled in Plenary Council to promote uniformity of discipline, to provide for the exigencies of the day, to devise new means for the maintenance and diffusion of our holy religion, which should be adequate to the great increase of the Catholic population. In the interval, the prelates, clergy, and faithful have been taught by a wholesome experience to appreciate the zeal, piety, and prudence that inspired the decrees of those venerable Fathers and to listen with cheerful submission to their authoritative voice, whether uttered in warning, in exhortation or positive enactment. And the whole American Church deeply feels and cordially proclaims her gratitude for the treasure bequeathed to us by their wise and timely legislation. Its framers, in great part, have gone before us with the sign of Faith and now sleep the sleep of peace. But their work, after following them (Apoc.) to the dread tribunal of the great Judge to plead in their behalf and insure their reward, has remained upon earth a safe-guide and rich blessing for the clergy and people of their generation.

Since that time, however, the body of our clergy and religious has grown to wonderful dimensions, our Catholic institutions have been multiplied tenfold, with a corresponding increase in the number of our faithful laity. The territory, likewise, over which they are spread has been greatly enlarged. The land of the far West that was once desolate and impassable, through God's providential mercy now rejoices and flourishes like the lily. Under His guiding hand it has been taught to bud forth and blossom and rejoice

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NOTE.—From the letter of His Eminence as Apostolic Delegate presiding over the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore.

with joy and praise. The wilderness has exchanged its solitude for the hum of busy life and industry; and the steps of our missionaries and Catholic settlers have invariably either preceded or accompanied the westward progress of civilization. Forests have given away to cities, where Catholic temples re-echo the praises of the Most High, where the priceless perfume of the "Clean Oblation," foretold by Malachi, daily ascends to heaven, and where the life-giving sacraments of Holy Church are dispensed by a devoted clergy. In view of this great progress of our holy religion, this marvellous widening of the tabernacles of Jacob, it has been judged wise and expedient, if not absolutely necessary, to examine anew the legislation of our predecessors, not with any purpose of radical change, much less of abrogation, but to preserve and perfect its spirit by adapting it to our altered circumstances. And as every day gives birth to new errors, and lapse of time or distance of place allows abuses to gradually creep into regular discipline, we have judged it the duty of our pastoral office to check the latter by recalling and enforcing established law, and to guard our flock against the former by timely words of paternal admonition.

Such, too, has been the expressed wish and injunction of our Holy Father Leo XIII., happily reigning, to whom, as Supreme Pontiff and successor of the Prince of the Apostles, by inherent right belongs the power of convoking this our Third National or Plenary Council, and of appointing (as he has graciously done) an Apostolic Delegate to preside over its deliberations.

One of the most important events that our age has witnessed was the assembling by Pius IX., of happy memory, of the General Council of the Vatican. It was held three years after the close of our Second Plenary Council, and all, or nearly all, of its members, and many besides of the prelates now assembled in this Third Plenary Council, enjoyed the rare privilege of sitting with the other Princes of the Church in the only Ecumenical Synod vouchsafed these latter ages. Its appointed task was to condemn the most influential and insidious errors of the day, and to complete the legislation on weighty matters of discipline that had been contemplated and discussed, but left undecided, by the Council of Trent. Like its predecessor, the Council of the Vatican was interrupted by the disturbed condition of Europe; and the Fathers, leaving the work of their deliberations unfinished, returned to their homes—some to this Western continent, others to remote regions of the East. But we would fain cherish the hope, and lift up to heaven our earnest prayer, that the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, who is ever ready to comfort His Church in all her tribulations, who holds in His hand the counsels of princes and the devices of peoples, may deign, in His own good time, to reunite the prelates, or their successors, over the tomb of St. Peter or elsewhere, as may seem best to His infinite wisdom. The Vatican Council, however, during its short session of seven months, gave solemn, authoritative utterance to some great truths which the Church had unvaryingly held from the days of Christ and His Apostles; but which she found it once more necessary to recall and inculcate against the widespread skepticism and unbelief of our day. Besides condemning the philosophy, no less wicked than false and teeming with contradictions, of the last two centuries, and especially of our own times, she had to uphold (such is the lamentable downward course of those who rebelled against her divine commission to teach all nations!) the truth and divinity of the Sacred Books against the very children of those, who once appealed to Scripture to disprove her teachings, and to maintain the dignity and value of human

reason against the lineal descendants of those, who once claimed reason as the supreme and only guide in picking out from her creed what mysteries they would retain, what mysteries they would reject. Nobly did she perform her duty and assert in the face of a forgetful or unbelieving world that reason is God's highest and best gift to man in the natural order, and that this most salutary aid of his weakness is not only not impaired, but strengthened, supplemented, and ennobled by the supernatural gift of Divine revelation.

We have no reason to fear that you, beloved brethren, are likely to be carried away by these or other false doctrines condemned by the Vatican Council, such as materialism or the denial of God's power to create, to reveal to mankind His hidden truths, to display by miracles His almighty power in this world which is the work of His hands. But neither can we close our eyes to the fact that teachers of skepticism and irreligion are at work in our country. They have crept into the leading educational institutions of our non-Catholic fellow-citizens, they have (though rarely) made their appearance in the public press and even in the pulpit. Could we rely fully on the innate good sense of the American people and on that habitual reverence for God and religion which has so far been their just pride and glory, there might seem comparatively little danger of the general diffusion of those wild theories which reject or ignore Revelation, undermine morality, and end not unfrequently by banishing God from His own creation. But when we take into account the daily signs of growing unbelief, and see how its heralds not only seek to mould the youthful mind in our colleges and seats of learning, but are also actively working amongst the masses, we cannot but shudder at the dangers that threaten us in the future. When to this we add the rapid growth of that false civilization which hides its foulness under the name of enlightenment—involving, as it does, the undisguised worship of mammon, the anxious search after every ease, comfort, and luxury for man's physical well-being, the all-absorbing desire to promote his material interests, the unconcern or rather contempt for those of his higher and better nature—we cannot but feel that out of all this must grow a heartless materialism, which is the best soil to receive the seeds of unbelief and irreligion, which threaten to desolate the country at no distant day. The first thing to perish will be our liberties. For men, who know not God or religion, can never respect the inalienable rights which man has received from his Creator. The State in such case must become a despotism, whether its power be lodged in the hands of one or many.

To you, beloved brethren, who possess the treasure of Catholic faith, we may safely address the reiterated injunctions of the Lord to the chosen leader of His people.

"Take courage and be strong, . . . take courage and be very valiant. . . . Behold I command thee, take courage and be strong. Fear not and be not dismayed, because the Lord thy God is with thee."[1] The latter clause gives the reason why we should take courage and be strong. An intermediate verse gives the means of securing God's assistance: "Let not the book of this law depart from thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate on it day and night, that thou mayest observe and do the things that are written in it." Keep, then, day and night, before your eyes the Law of God and His teachings through that Holy Church that He has appointed mother and mistress of all men. Fly the reading of all infidel books, and keep them from your

[1] Josue i. 6, 7, 8, 9.

children, as you would the poison of asp or basilisk. Teach them that you and they, in listening to Holy Church, have the guidance of Him who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Let others doubt or deny, but with the Apostle, you know whom you have believed, and you are certain that He will make good the trust you have reposed in Him.[1]

Christ our Lord commissioned His Apostles to teach mankind the truths they had been taught by Him. They received no commandment to write on any doctrine, much less to draw up a body of articles of faith such as our children now learn from the catechism. They preached and taught by word of mouth; or, when occasion offered itself, they wrote as the Divine Spirit prompted them. What they wrote and what they delivered by oral instruction are equally God's Word. And this two-fold Word, written and unwritten, is the Deposit of Divine truth, committed to the keeping of the Catholic Church, and chiefly to him on whom the Church was built—the only Apostle who, in the full sense of the words, yet lives and rules in the person of his successors, and from his unfailing chair imparts to all who seek it the truth of Christian faith.[2] It is his office to confirm his brethren, and the history of the Church exhibits him, from the beginning and through all ages, as faithfully fulfilling the charge entrusted to him by his Master.[3] From the earliest ages down to our own, the voice of Peter has been foremost in condemning all deviations from apostolic doctrine. No threats of worldly power could subdue or silence that voice. To such threats Peter, through his successors, has ever given the same answer that he gave at Jerusalem to the assembled priests and ancients.[4] No pleading of princes and potentates could ever win Rome's sympathy for error; no heresy under false semblance of Catholic truth ever yet eluded her vigilant eye.[5] As soon as any novelty appeared, all hearts and eyes were turned towards the Chair of Peter, and when that Chair gave its decision the Christian people yielded obedience. Those who would not were cut off from the communion of the Church, and became thenceforth as the heathen and the publican.

This doctrine, therefore, which had so thoroughly wrought itself into the life and action of the Church, the Vatican Council deemed proper to consecrate by a solemn definition. Hence, that no one in future may craftily pretend not to know, how and whence to ascertain what the Church officially teaches; above all, that no one may henceforth scatter the baneful seeds of false doctrine with impunity, under the mask of an appeal from the judgment of the Holy See (whether it be to learned universities, or State tribunals, or future councils, particular or general, as was done by Luther and the Jansenists), the Church of the living God, through the Fathers of the Vatican Council, has unequivocally declared that her authentic spokesman is the successor of St. Peter in the Apostolic See of Rome, and that what he, as Head of the Church, officially decides is part of the Deposit of Faith intrusted to her keeping by Christ Our Lord, and hence subject to neither denial, doubt, nor revision, but to be implicitly received and believed by all.

In this authoritative declaration there is nothing new, nothing to give cause for wonder. It is only setting the solemn seal of definition upon what has always been the belief and practice of the Church. Yet "the gates of Hell," the powers of darkness that forever assail the Church built on Peter

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[1] II. Tim. i. 12. [2] See Epist. S. Petri Chrysologi inter Epp. S. Leonis M.
[3] Luke xii. 32. [4] Acts iv. 19–20. [5] Cf. St. Cyprian. Ep. lix.

—though knowing (for the very devils believe and tremble in believing[1]) that they cannot prevail against it nor make void God's promise[2]—seem to have been stirred to their very depths by the proclamation of this great truth. And their impotent rage has found its echo upon earth. The definition evoked a storm of fierce obloquy and reckless vituperation, such as has been seldom witnessed amongst our opponents. And a wretched handful of apostate Catholics "went out from us, but they were not of us."[3]

But, what was far more serious, the kings of the earth stood up and the princes assembled together against the Lord[4] and against His anointed Vicar, because of the definition. They revived the old war-cry raised by the Jews against our Saviour[5] and so often renewed by the persecutors of the Church. They pretended that by defining the infallibility of St. Peter's successor, she had made herself the enemy of Cæsar. Herein we see plainly verified the strong language of Scripture: "Iniquity hath lied to itself."[6] The Pope, even after the proclamation of his infallibility, is no more the enemy of Cæsar and of human governments, than was the infallible Peter the enemy of Nero, or Christ our Lord, who is infallible truth itself, the enemy of Augustus and Tiberius under whom He was born into the world, taught and suffered. The governments by which, three centuries ago, the new tenets of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin had been imposed on reluctant peoples by the sword, were the first, indeed the only ones, to again unsheathe it against Catholic believers, and especially against the bishops and clergy. It was their purpose to exterminate by degrees the Catholic hierarchy, and replace it by a servile priesthood that would subordinate its preaching and ministry to the will of the State. To do this they had to trample on solemn treaties and organic laws. But the Catholics of Prussia, clergy and people, while proving themselves most devoted and faithful to their country's laws, stood up like a wall of adamant against the tyranny of its rulers. With generous vigor and admirable constancy, they availed themselves of every legal and constitutional means to check the advances of despotism and save their own freedom and that of their country. They have given to the world a glorious example, which it is to be hoped the victims of tyrannous Liberalism in Catholic countries may some day have the wisdom or the courage to imitate. The struggle has now lasted fourteen years; but the very friends of this persecuting legislation have been driven at last to acknowledge that it has proved to be a miserable failure; and no better proof of it could be found than the fact, that the rulers of Prussia have had to fall back on the patriotism of the Catholic body to stay the threatening march of socialism and revolution. In Switzerland, too, the persecution has yielded to the policy of mildness and conciliation adopted by Our Holy Father, Leo XIII.

Beloved brethren, we have no need to encourage you to hold steadfastly to this doctrine of the Vatican Council; for you were trained from infancy to believe it, as were your fathers before you, while it was not yet invested with the formalities of a definition, just as the early Christians held firmly to the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost three hundred years before the Church found it necessary to define them in the Councils of Nice and Byzantium.

And in our own country, writers and speakers who know the Church only by the caricatures drawn by prejudice, have occasionally re-echoed the same

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[1] Credunt et contremiscunt, James ii. 19. [2] Matth. xvi. 18. [3] John ii. 19.
[4] Acts iv. 26. [5] John xix. 12, 15. [6] Ps. xxvi. 19.

charge; but despite local and temporary excitements, the good sense of the American people has always prevailed against the calumny. We think we can claim to be acquainted both with the laws, institutions, and spirit of the Catholic Church, and with the laws, institutions, and spirit of our country; and we emphatically declare that there is no antagonism between them. A Catholic finds himself at home in the United States; for the influence of his Church has constantly been exercised in behalf of individual rights and popular liberties. And the right-minded American nowhere finds himself more at home than in the Catholic Church, for nowhere else can he breathe more freely that atmosphere of Divine truth, which alone can make him free.[1]

We repudiate with equal earnestness the assertion that we need to lay aside any of our devotedness to our Church to be true Americans; the insinuation that we need to abate any of our love for our country's principles and institutions, to be faithful Catholics. To argue that the Catholic Church is hostile to our great Republic because she teaches that "there is no power but from God";[2] because, therefore, back of the events which led to the formation of the Republic, she sees the Providence of God leading to that issue, and back of our country's laws the authority of God as their sanction,—this is evidently so illogical and contradictory an accusation that we are astonished to hear it advanced by persons of ordinary intelligence. We believe that our country's heroes were the instruments of the God of Nations in establishing this home of freedom. To both the Almighty and to His instruments in the work we look with grateful reverence; and to maintain the inheritance of freedom which they have left us, should it ever—which God forbid—be imperilled, our Catholic citizens will be found to stand forward as one man, ready to pledge anew "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor."

No less illogical would be the notion, that there is aught in the free spirit of our American institutions incompatible with perfect docility to the Church of Christ. The spirit of American freedom is not one of anarchy or license. It essentially involves love of order, respect for rightful authority, and obedience to just laws. There is nothing in the character of the most liberty-loving American which could hinder his reverential submission to the Divine authority of Our Lord or to the like authority delegated by Him to His Apostles and His Church. Nor are there in the world more devoted adherents of the Catholic Church, the See of Peter, and the Vicar of Christ, than the Catholics of the United States. Narrow, insular, national views and jealousies concerning ecclesiastical authority and Church organization may have sprung naturally enough from the selfish policy of certain rulers and nations in by-gone times, but they find no sympathy in the spirit of the true American Catholic. His natural instincts, no less than his religious training, would forbid him to submit in matters of faith to the dictation of the State or to any merely human authority whatsoever. He accepts the religion and the Church that are from God, and he knows well that these are universal, not national or local,—for all the children of men, not for any special tribe or tongue. We glory that we are, and, with God's blessing, shall continue to be, not the American Church, nor the Church of the United States, nor a Church in any other sense exclusive or limited, but an integral part of the one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, which is the Body of Christ, in which there is no distinction of classes and nationalities,—in which all are one in Christ Jesus.[3]

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[1] John viii. 32. [2] Rom. xiii. 1. [3] Gal. iii. 28.

While the assaults of calumny and persecution directed against the Church since the Vatican Council have abundantly shown how angry the powers of evil have been at the Council's luminous utterances of Divine truth, our Holy Father the Pope has been, naturally enough, the main object of attack. And Divine Providence has been pleased to leave him for a while at the mercy of his enemies, in order that their impious violence might work out the demonstration of its own injustice; that the true character and the indestructibility of the office of St. Peter might be made manifest to the world; that the wisdom of the Providence which has guarded the independence of that office in the past, might be vindicated and reaffirmed for the future. The great and beloved Pius IX. died the "Prisoner of the Vatican," and Leo XIII. has inherited his Apostolic trials together with his Apostolic office. Day after day he has seen the consecrated patrimony of religion and charity swept into Cæsar's coffers by the ruthless hand of spoliation and confiscation. At this moment he sees that same grasp laid upon the property of the Propaganda, piously set apart for spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the missionary countries of the world. So utterly unjustifiable an act has called forth a cry of indignant protest from the Catholics of all countries, and from no country has the cry gone forth clearer and louder than from our own. We thank our Government for the action that saved the American College from confiscation, and we hope that the protest and appeal of all governments and peoples that "love justice and hate iniquity" may yet shame the spoiler into honesty. Meanwhile the hearts of all Catholics go out all the more lovingly toward their persecuted Chief Pastor; and from their worldly means, be they abundant or scanty, they gladly supply him with the means necessary for carrying on the administration of his high office. Such has been your liberality in the past, beloved brethren, that we hardly need exhort you to generosity in the collection for the Holy Father, which will continue to be made annually throughout all the dioceses of the country. Let your devoted affection be shown by your deeds, and the persistency of injustice be more than matched by the constancy of your faithful and generous love.

While enduring with the heroism of a martyr the trials which beset him, and trustfully awaiting the Almighty's day of deliverance, the energy and wisdom of Leo XIII. are felt to the ends of the earth. He is carrying on with the governments of Europe the negotiations which promise soon to bring peace to the Church. In the East he is preparing the way for the return to Catholic unity of the millions whom the Greek schism has so long deprived of communion with the See of Peter, and is following the progress of exploration in lands hitherto unknown or inaccessible with corresponding advances of Catholic missions. To the whole world his voice has again and again been gone forth in counsels of eloquence and wisdom, pointing out the path to the acquisition of truth in the important domain of philosophy and history; the best means for the improvement of human life in all its phases —individual, domestic, and social; the ways in which the children of God should walk: "that all flesh may see the salvation of God."

But in all the wide circle of his great responsibility, the progress of the Church in these United States forms, in a special manner, both a source of joy and an object of solicitude to the Holy Father. With loving care his predecessors watched and encouraged her first feeble beginnings. They cheered and fostered her development in the pure atmosphere of freedom, when the name of Carroll shone with equal lustre at the head of her newborn Hierarchy and on the roll of our country's patriots. Step by step they di-

rected her progress, as with marvellous rapidity the clergy and the dioceses have multiplied; the hundreds of the faithful have increased to thousands and to millions; her churches, schools, asylums, hospitals, academies, and colleges, have covered the land with homes of divine truth and Christian charity. Not yet a century has elapsed since the work was inaugurated by the appointment of the first Bishop of Baltimore in 1789; and, as we gaze upon the results already reached, we must exclaim: "By the Lord hath this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes."[1]

In all this astonishing development, from the rude beginnings of pioneer missionary toil, along the nearer and nearer approaches to the beauteous symmetry of the Church's perfect organization, the advance so gradual yet so rapid has been safely guided in the lines of Catholic and Apostolic tradition, by the combined efforts and wisdom of our local Hierarchy and of the successors of St. Peter. It was in order to take counsel with the representatives of the American Hierarchy concerning the important interests of religion in this country, that the Holy Father, last year, invited the Archbishops of the United States to Rome. And the object of the present council is to put into practical shape the means of religious improvement then resolved upon or suggested.

EDUCATION OF THE CLERGY.

One of our first cares has been to provide for the more perfect education of aspirants to the holy Priesthood. It has always been the Church's endeavor that her clergy should be eminent in learning. For she has always considered that nothing less than this is required by their sacred office of guarding and dispensing Divine truth. "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge," says the Most High, "and the people shall seek the law at his mouth." This is true in all times; for no advance in secular knowledge, no diffusion of popular education, can do away with the office of the teaching ministry, which Our Lord has declared shall last forever. In every age it is and shall be the duty of God's priests to proclaim the salutary truths which our Heavenly Father has given to the world through His Divine Son; to present them to each generation in the way that will move their minds and hearts to embrace and love them; to defend them, when necessary, against every attack of error. From this it is obvious that the priest should have a wide acquaintance with every department of learning that has a bearing on religious truth. Hence in our age, when so many misleading theories are put forth on every side, when every department of natural truth and fact is actively explored for objections against revealed religion, it is evident how extensive and thorough should be the knowledge of the minister of the Divine Word, that he may be able to show forth worthily the beauty, the superiority, the necessity of the Christian religion, and to prove that there is nothing in all that God has made to contradict anything that God has taught.

Hence the priest who has the noble ambition of attaining to the high level of his holy office, may well consider himself a student all his life; and of the leisure hours which he can find amid the duties of his ministry, he will have very few that he can spare for miscellaneous reading, and none at all to waste. And hence, too, the evident duty devolving on us, to see that the course of education in our ecclesiastical colleges and seminaries be as perfect as it can be made. During the century of extraordinary growth now closing, the care

[1] Matt. xxi. 42; Ps. cxvii. 22.

of the Church in this country has been to send forth as rapidly as possible holy, zealous, hard-working priests, to supply the needs of the multitudes calling for the ministrations of religion. She has not on that account neglected to prepare them for their divine work by a suitable education, as her numerous and admirable seminaries testify; but the course of study was often more rapid and restricted than she desired. At present our improved circumstances make it practicable both to lengthen and widen the course, and for this the Council has duly provided.

We are confident, beloved brethren, that you feel as deeply interested as ourselves in the accomplishment of these great results. This you have hitherto manifested by the zealous liberality by which you have enabled us to build and support our seminaries; and we are well assured that you will not be found wanting, should even greater efforts be necessary, to enable us to make the education and usefulness of the clergy as perfect as we desire. In the future, as in the past, look upon your annual contribution to the Seminary fund as one of your most important duties as Catholics, and let your generosity be proportioned to the dignity and sacredness of the object for which you offer it.

And here we remind those among our Catholic people to whom God has been pleased to give wealth, that it is their duty and their privilege to consider themselves the Lord's stewards, in the use of what His Providence has placed in their hands; that they should be foremost in helping on the work of the Church of Christ during life, and make sure to have God among their heirs when they die; and we recommend to them as specially useful the founding of scholarships, either in their diocesan or provincial Seminaries, or in the American College in Rome, or elsewhere, as circumstances may suggest.

PASTORAL RIGHTS.

No small portion of our attention has been bestowed on the framing of such legislation as will best secure the rights and interests of your pastors, and of all ranks of the clergy in this country. It is but natural, beloved brethren, that the first and dearest object of our solicitude should be our venerable clergy. They are our dearest brethren, bound to us by ties more sacred than those of flesh and blood. Our elevation to a higher office only draws them to us more closely, since their happiness and welfare are thereby made the first object of our responsibility, and since upon their devoted labors must mainly depend the welfare of the souls entrusted to our charge. We need not tell you, beloved brethren, how admirably they fulfil their sacred trust. You are witnesses to their lives of toil and sacrifice. And to them we can truly say in the words of St. Paul, "You are our glory and our joy."[1]

The rights of the clergy have reference chiefly to their exercising the sacred ministry in their missions, to the fixity of their tenure of office and to the inviolableness of their pastoral authority within proper limits. It is the spirit of the Church that the various grades of authority in her organization should in no wise be in rivalry or conflict, but orderly and harmonious. This she has secured by her wise laws, based upon the experience of centuries, and representing the perfection of Church organization. It is obvious that in countries like our own, where from rudimentary beginnings our organization

[1] I. Thes. ii. 20.

is only gradually advancing towards perfection, the full application of these laws is impracticable; but in proportion as they become practicable, it is our desire, not less than that of the Holy See, that they should go into effect. For we have the fullest confidence in the wisdom with which the Church devised these laws, and we heartily rejoice at every approach towards perfect organization in the portion of the vineyard over which we have jurisdiction. This has been to some degree accomplished by regulations enacted during recent years, and still more by the decrees of the present Council.

But while it is our desire to do all on our part that both justice and affection can prompt, for fully securing all proper rights and privileges to our priests, let us remind you, beloved brethren, that on your conduct must their happiness chiefly depend. A grateful and pious flock is sure to make a happy pastor. But if the people do not respond to their pastor's zeal, if they are cold and ungrateful or disedifying, then indeed is his lot sad and pitiable. Since, therefore, the Priests of God leave all things to devote themselves to your spiritual welfare, show by your affection, by your co-operation with their efforts for your spiritual improvement, and even by your care for their physical comfort, that you appreciate their devotedness and the reciprocal obligation which it imposes. Look upon your priests as your best friends, your trustiest advisers, your surest guides. If duty sometimes calls upon them to admonish or rebuke you, remember that the reproof is meant for your good, and take it in the spirit in which it is given. And if perchance they have to speak to you oftener than is pleasant about church finances and the demands of charity, understand that it must be at least as disagreeable to them as it is to you; that it is not for themselves, but for the needs of the parish church or school, which are intended for your benefit, or of the parish poor, who are your charge, that they have to plead; and that, while they are to bear in mind the advisability of speaking of money as seldom as possible, you must be mindful to make your generosity equal to the need, and thereby save both your pastors and yourselves the painful necessity of frequent appeals.

And here we deem it proper to say a few words concerning church properties and church debts. The manner of holding the legal title to these properties is different in different places, according to the requirements of local civil laws; but whether the title be held by the bishop, or by boards of diocesan or parish trustees, it always remains true that the properties are held in trust for the Church for the benefit of the people. One generation buys or builds, another generation improves and adorns, and each generation uses and transmits for the use of others yet to come,—bishops and priests having the burden of the administration and being sacredly responsible for its faithful performance.

In the discharge of this duty it often becomes necessary to contract church debts. Where the multiplication of the Catholic population has been so rapid, rapid work had to be done in erecting churches and schools. And if, under such circumstances, pastors had to wait till all the funds were in hand before beginning the work, a generation would be left without necessary spiritual aids, and might be lost to the Church and to God. We fully recognize, beloved brethren, how strictly we are bound to prevent the contraction of debts without real necessity; and this we have endeavored to secure by careful legislation. Still, despite all our efforts, in must inevitably happen that the burden imposed on us by our gigantic task of providing for the spiritual wants of the present and the rising generation will always be heavy,

and will weigh upon us all. But the special Providence of God towards our country, which has made the work and the need so great, has never failed hitherto to inspire our people with a zeal equal to the demand. You have rivaled your pastors in the ardor of their desire for the building up of the Church of Christ and the extension of His Kingdom; and we are confident that you will preserve your zeal unto the end, and transmit it undiminished to your descendants. It is our earnest wish that existing debts should be liquidated as soon as possible, in order that the money now consumed in paying interest may be employed in the great improvements still to be made, and especially in helping on the glorious work of Christian education.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

Scarcely, if at all, secondary to the Church's desire for the education of the clergy, is her solicitude for the education of the laity. It is not for themselves, but for the people, that the Church wishes her clergy to be learned, as it is not for themselves only, but for the people that they are priests. Popular education has always been a chief object of the Church's care; in fact, it is not too much to say that the history of civilization and education is the history of the Church's work. In the rude ages, when semi-barbarous chieftains boasted of their illiteracy, she succeeded in diffusing that love of learning which covered Europe with schools and universities; and thus from the barbarous tribes of the early middle ages, she built up the civilized nations of modern times. Even subsequent to the religious dissensions of the sixteenth century, whatever progress has been made in education is mainly due to the impetus which she had previously given. In our own country notwithstanding the many difficulties attendant on first beginnings and unexampled growth, we already find her schools, academies, and colleges everywhere, built and sustained by voluntary contributions, even at the cost of great sacrifices, and comparing favorably with the best educational institutions in the land.

These facts abundantly attest the Church's desire for popular instruction. The beauty of truth, the refining and elevating influences of knowledge, are meant for all, and she wishes them to be brought within the reach of all. Knowledge enlarges our capacity both for self-improvement and for promoting the welfare of our fellow-men; and in so noble a work the Church wishes every hand to be busy. Knowledge, too, is the best weapon against pernicious errors. It is only "a little learning" that is "a dangerous thing." In days like ours, when error is so pretentious and aggressive, every one needs to be as completely armed as possible with sound knowledge,—not only the clergy, but the people also, that they may be able to withstand the noxious influences of popularized irreligion. In the great coming combat between truth and error, between Faith and Agnosticism, an important part of the fray must be borne by the laity, and woe to them if they are not well prepared. And if, in the olden days of vassalage and serfdom, the Church honored every individual, no matter how humble his position, and labored to give him the enlightenment that would qualify him for future responsibilities, much more now, in the era of popular rights and liberties, when every individual is an active and influential factor in the body politic, does she desire that all should be fitted by suitable training for an intelligent and conscientious discharge of the important duties that will devolve upon them.

Few, if any, will deny that a sound civilization must depend upon sound

popular education. But education, in order to be sound and to produce beneficial results, must develop what is best in man, and make him not only clever, but good. A one-sided education will develop a one-sided life; and such a life will surely topple over, and so will every social system that is built up of such lives. True civilization requires that not only the physical and intellectual, but also the moral and religious, well-being of the people should be promoted, and at least with equal care. Take away religion from a people, and morality would soon follow; morality gone, even their physical condition will ere long degenerate into corruption which breeds decrepitude, while their intellectual attainments would only serve as a light to guide them to deeper depths of vice and ruin. This has been so often demonstrated in the history of the past, and is, in fact, so self-evident, that one is amazed to find any difference of opinion about it. A civilization without religion would be a civilization of "the struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest," in which cunning and strength would become the substitutes for principle, virtue, conscience, and duty. As a matter of fact, there never has been a civilization worthy of the name without religion; and from the facts of history the laws of human nature can easily be inferred.

Hence education, in order to foster civilization, must foster religion. Now the three great educational agencies are the home, the Church, and the school. These mould men and shape society. Therefore each of them, to do its part well, must foster religion. But many, unfortunately, while avowing that religion should be the light and the atmosphere of the home and of the Church, are content to see it excluded from the school, and even advocate as the best school system that which necessarily excludes religion. Few surely will deny that childhood and youth are the periods of life when the character ought especially to be subjected to religious influences. Nor can we ignore the palpable fact that the school is an important factor in the forming of childhood and youth,—so important that its influence often outweighs that of home and Church. It cannot, therefore, be desirable or advantageous that religion should be excluded from the school. On the contrary, it ought there to be one of the chief agencies for moulding the young life to all that is true and virtuous, and holy. To shut religion out of the school, and keep it for home and the Church, is, logically, to train up a generation that will consider religion good for home and the Church, but not for the practical business of real life. But a more false and pernicious notion could not be imagined. Religion, in order to elevate a people, should inspire their whole life and rule their relations with one another. A life is not dwarfed, but ennobled by being lived in the presence of God. Therefore the school, which principally gives the knowledge fitting for practical life, ought to be pre-eminently under the holy influence of religion. From the shelter of home and school the youth must soon go out into the busy ways of trade or traffic or professional practice. In all these the principles of religion should animate and direct him. But he cannot expect to learn these principles in the work-shop or the office or the counting-room. Therefore let him be well and thoroughly imbued with them by the joint influences of home and school, before he is launched out on the dangerous sea of life.

All denominations of Christians are now awaking to this great truth, which the Catholic Church has never ceased to maintain. Reason and experience are forcing them to recognize that the only practical way to secure a Christian people is to give the youth a Christian education. The avowed enemies of Christianity in some European countries are banishing religion

from the schools, in order gradually to eliminate it from among the people. In this they are logical, and we may well profit by the lesson. Hence the cry for Christian education is going up from all religious bodies throughout the land. And this is no narrowness and "sectarianism" on their part; it is an honest and logical endeavor to preserve Christian truth and morality among the people by fostering religion in the young. Nor is it any antagonism to the State; on the contrary, it is an honest endeavor to give to the State better citizens, by making them better Christians. The friends of Christian education do not condemn the State for not imparting religious instruction in the public schools as they are now organized; because they well know it does not lie within the province of the State to teach religion. They simply follow their conscience by sending their children to denominational schools, where religion can have its rightful place and influence.

Two objects, therefore, dear brethren, we have in view, to multiply our schools, and to perfect them. We must multiply them, till every Catholic child in the land shall have within its reach the means of education. There is still much to do ere this be attained. There are still thousands of Catholic children in the United States deprived of the benefit of a Catholic school. Pastors and parents should not rest till this defect be remedied. No parish is complete till it has schools adequate to the needs of its children, and the pastor and people of such a parish should feel that they have not accomplished their entire duty until the want is supplied.

But then, we must also perfect our schools. We repudiate the idea that the Catholic school need be in any respect inferior to any other school whatsoever. And if hitherto, in some places, our people have acted on the principle that it is better to have an imperfect Catholic school than to have none, let them now push their praiseworthy ambition still further, and not relax their efforts till their schools be elevated to the highest educational excellence. And we implore parents not to hasten to take their children from school, but to give them all the time and all the advantages that they have the capacity to profit by, so that, in after life, their children may "rise up and call them blessed."

THE CHRISTIAN HOME.

We need hardly remind you, beloved brethren, that while home life would not, as a rule, be sufficient to supply the absence of good or counteract the evil of dangerous influences in the school, it is equally true that all that the Christian school could accomplish would be inadequate without the co-operation of the Christian home. Christian schools sow the seed, but Christian homes must first prepare the soil, and afterwards foster the seed and bring it to maturity.

1. *Christian Marriage.*—The basis of the Christian home is Christian marriage; that is, marriage entered into according to religion, and cemented by God's blessing. So great is the importance of marriage to the temporal and eternal welfare of mankind, that, as it had God for its Founder in the Old Law, so, in the New Law, it was raised by Our Divine Lord to the dignity of a sacrament of the Christian religion. Natural likings and instincts have their own value and weight; but they ought not by themselves be a decisive motive in so important a step as Christian marriage; nor are they a safe guarantee for the proper fulfillment of the high ends for which marriage was ordained. That Christian hearts and lives may be wisely and rightly joined, God must join them, and religion sanctify the union; and

though the Church sometimes permits the contraction of mixed marriages, she never does so without regret and without a feeling of anxiety for the future happiness of that union and for the eternal salvation of its offspring.

2. *The Indissolubility of Marriage.*—The security of the Christian home is in the indissolubility of the marriage tie. Christian marriage, once consummated, can never be dissolved save by death. Let it be well understood that even adultery, though it may justify "separation from bed and board," cannot loose the marriage tie, so that either of the parties may marry again during the life of the other. Nor has "legal divorce" the slightest power, before God, to loose the bond of marriage and to make a subsequent marriage valid. "Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."[1] In common with all Christian believers and friends of civilization, we deplore the havoc wrought by the divorce laws of our country. These laws are fast loosening the foundations of society. Let Catholics at least remember that such divorces are powerless in conscience. Let them enter into marriage only through worthy and holy motives, and with the blessings of religion, especially with the blessing of the Nuptial Mass. And then, far from wishing for means of escape from their union, they will rejoice that it cannot be divided but by death.

3. *Home Virtues.*—The pervading atmosphere of the Christian home should be Christian charity—the love of God and of the neighbor. It should be the ambition and study of Christian parents to make their home a sanctuary, in which no harsh or angry, no indelicate or profane word should be uttered,—in which truth, unselfishness, self-control, should be carefully cultivated, in which the thought of God, the desire to please God, should be, sweetly and naturally, held before the children as their habitual motives. From the home sanctuary, the incense of prayer should ascend as a most sweet morning and evening sacrifice to the Lord. How beautiful and rich in blessings is the assembling of parents and children for morning and even prayer! Our hearts are filled with consolation when, in the course of our pastoral visits, we meet families in which this holy practice is faithfully observed. In such families we are sure to find proofs of the special benedictions of heaven. Faith, religion, and virtue are there fostered to luxuriant growth, and final perseverance almost assured. We earnestly exhort all parents to this salutary custom. And if it be not always feasible in the morning, at least every evening, at a fixed hour, let the entire family be assembled for night prayers, followed by a short reading from the Holy Scriptures, the Following of Christ, or some other pious book.

4. *Good Reading.*—Let the adornments of home be chaste and holy pictures, and, still more, sound, interesting, and profitable books. No indelicate representation should ever be tolerated in a Christian home. Artistic merit in the work is no excuse for the danger thus presented. No child ought to be subjected to temptation by its own parents and in its own home. But let the walls be beautified with what will keep the inmates in mind of our Divine Lord, and of His saints, and with such other pictures of the great and the good as will be incentives to civic and religious virtue.

The same remark applies equally to books and periodicals. Not only should the immoral, the vulgar, the sensational novel, the indecently illustrated newspaper, and publications tending to weaken faith in the religion and the Church of Jesus Christ, be absolutely excluded from every Christian

[1] Matt. xix. 6.

home, but the dangerously exciting and morbidly emotional, whatever, in a word, is calculated to impair or lower the tone of faith or morals in the youthful mind and heart, should be carefully banished. Parents would be sure to warn and withhold their children from anything that would poison or sicken their bodies; let them be at least as watchful against intellectual and moral poison. But let the family book-shelves be well supplied with what is both pleasant and wholesome. Happily, the store of Catholic literature, as well as works which, though not written by Catholics nor treating of religion, are pure, instructive, and elevating, is now so large that there can be no excuse for running risk or wasting one's time with what is inferior, tainted, or suspicious. Remember, Christian parents, that the development of the youthful character is intimately connected with the development of the taste for reading. To books as well as to associations may be applied the wise saying: "Show me your company and I will tell you what you are." See, then, that none but good books and newspapers, as well as none but good companions, be admitted to your homes. Train your children to a love of history and biography. Inspire them with the ambition to become so well acquainted with the history and doctrines of the Church as to be able to give an intelligent answer to any honest inquiry. Should their surroundings call for it, encourage them, as they grow older, to acquire such knowledge of popularly mooted questions of a scientific or philosophical character as will suffice to make them firm in their faith and proof against sophistry. We should be glad to see thoroughly solid and popular works on these important subjects, from able Catholic writers, become more numerous. Teach your children to take a special interest in the history of our own country. We consider the establishment of our country's independence, the shaping of its liberties and laws as a work of special Providence, its framers "building wiser than they knew," the Almighty's hand guiding them. And if ever the glorious fabric is subverted or impaired, it will be by men forgetful of the sacrifices of the heroes that reared it, the virtues that cemented it, and the principles on which it rests, or ready to sacrifice principle and virtue to the interests of self or party. As we desire, therefore, that the history of the United States should be carefully taught in all our Catholic schools, and have directed that it be specially dwelt upon in the education of the young ecclesiastical students in our preparatory seminaries, so also we desire that it form a favorite part of the home library and home reading. We must keep firm and solid the liberties of our country by keeping fresh the noble memories of the past, and thus sending forth from our Catholic homes into the arena of public life not partisans, but patriots.

5. *The Holy Scriptures.*—But it can hardly be necessary for us to remind you, beloved brethren, that the most highly valued treasure of every family library, and the most frequently and lovingly made use of, should be the Holy Scriptures. Doubtless you have often read A'Kempis's burning thanksgiving to our Lord for having bestowed on us not only the adorable treasure of His Body in the Holy Eucharist, but also that of the Holy Scriptures, "the Holy Books, for the comfort and direction of our life."[1] And you have before your eyes, prefixed to the Douay version of the Holy Bible, the exhortation of Pope Pius the Sixth in his letter to the Archbishop of Florence, that "the faithful should be moved to the reading of the Holy Scriptures; for these," he says, "are most abundant sources which ought to

[1] Fol. of Christ, B. 4, c. ii.

be left open to every one to draw from them purity of morals and of doctrine, to eradicate the errors which are so widely disseminated in these corrupt times." And St. Paul declares that "what things soever were written, were written for our learning; that through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope."[1] We hope that no family can be found amongst us without a correct version of the Holy Scriptures. Among other versions, we recommend the Douay, which is venerable as used by our forefathers for three centuries, which comes down to us sanctioned by innumerable authorizations, and which was suitably annotated by the learned Bishop Challoner, by Canon Haydock, and especially by the late Archbishop Kenrick.

But in your reading remember the admonition of A'Kempis: "The Holy Scriptures must be read in the same spirit in which they were written; if thou wilt derive profit, read with humility, simplicity, and faith."[2] And keep ever before your mind the principle laid down by St. Peter in the first chapter of his second Epistle: "Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation, for prophecy came not by the will of man at any time, but the holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost." And this other given by St. John, in the fourth chapter of his first Epistle, in the name of the Apostolic-teaching Church: "Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits if they be of God. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth us not; by this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." In these two divinely inspired rules you have always a sure safeguard against the danger of error.

6. *The Catholic Press.*—Finally, Christian parents, let us beg your earnest consideration of this important truth, that upon you, singly and individually, must practically depend the solution of the question, whether or not the Catholic press is to accomplish the great work which Providence and the Church expect of it at this time. So frequently and so forcibly has the providential mission of the press been dwelt upon by Popes and prelates and distinguished Catholic writers, and so assiduously have their utterances been quoted and requoted everywhere, that no one certainly stands in need of arguments to be convinced of this truth. But all this will be only words in the air, unless it can be brought home to each parent and made practical in each household. If the head of each Catholic family will recognize it as his privilege and his duty to contribute towards supporting the Catholic press, by subscribing for one or more Catholic periodicals, and keeping himself well acquainted with the information they impart, then the Catholic press will be sure to attain to its rightful development and to accomplish its destined mission. But choose a journal that is thoroughly Catholic, instructive, and edifying; not one that would be, while Catholic in name or pretence, uncatholic in tone and spirit, disrespectful to constituted authority, or biting and uncharitable to Catholic brethren.

Beloved brethren, a great social revolution is sweeping over the world. Its purpose, hidden or avowed, is to dethrone Christ and religion. The ripples of the movement have been observed in our country. God grant that its tidal wave may not break over us. Upon you, Christian parents, it mainly depends whether it shall or not; for, such as our homes are, such shall our people be. We beseech you, therefore, to ponder carefully all that

[1] Rom. xv. 4. [2] B. 1, c. v.

we have said concerning the various constituents of a true Christian home, and, to the utmost of your ability, to carry them into effect. And we entreat all pastors of souls to bear unceasingly in mind, that upon the Christian school and the Christian homes in their parishes must mainly depend the fruit of their priestly labors. Let them concentrate their efforts on these two points,—to make the schools and the homes what they ought to be;—then indeed will they carry to the Lord of the harvest full and ripe sheaves, and the future generation will bless them for transmitting unimpaired the priceless gifts of faith and religion.

THE LORD'S DAY.

There are many sad facts in the experience of nations, which we may well store up as lessons of practical wisdom. Not the least important of these is the fact that one of the surest marks and measures of the decay of religion in a people is their non-observance of the Lord's Day. In traveling through some European countries a Christian's heart is pained by the almost unabated rush of toil and traffic on Sunday. First, grasping avarice thought it could not afford to spare the day to God; then unwise governments, yielding to the pressure of mammon, relaxed the laws which for many centuries had guarded the day's sacredness,—forgetting that there are certain fundamental principles which ought not to be sacrificed to popular caprice or greed. And when, as usually happens, neglect of religion had passed, by lapse of time, into hostility to religion, this growing neglect of the Lord's Day was easily made use of as a means to bring religion itself into contempt. The Church mourned, protested, struggled, but was almost powerless to resist the combined forces of popular avarice and Cæsar's influence arrayed on the side of irreligion. The result is the lamentable desecration which all Christians must deplore.

And the consequences of this desecration are as manifest as the desecration itself. The Lord's Day is the poor man's day of rest; it has been taken from him; and the laboring classes are a seething volcano of social discontent. The Lord's Day is the home day, drawing closer the sweet domestic ties by giving the toiler a day with wife and children; but it has been turned into a day of labor, and home ties are fast losing their sweetness and their hold. The Lord's Day is the church-day, strengthening and consecrating the bond of brotherhood among all men by their kneeling together around the altars of the one Father in heaven; but men are drawn away from this blessed communion of Saints, and, as a natural consequence, they are lured into the counterfeit communion of Socialism and other wild and destructive systems. The Lord's Day is God's Day, rendering ever nearer and more intimate the union between the creature and his Creator, and thus ennobling human life in all its relations; and where this bond is weakened, an effort is made to cut man loose from God entirely, and to leave him, according to the expression of St. Paul, "without God in this world."[1] The profanation of the Lord's Day, whatever be its pretext, is a defrauding both of God and His creatures, and retribution is not slow.

In this country there are tendencies and influences at work to bring about a similar result, and it behooves all who love God and care for society to see that they be checked. As usual, greed for gain lies at the bottom of the movement. Even when the pretence put forward is popular convenience or

[1] Ephes. ii. 12.

popular amusement, the clamor for larger liberty does not come so much from those who desire the convenience or the amusement as from those who hope to enrich themselves by supplying it. Now, far be it from us to advocate such Sunday laws as would hinder necessary work, or prohibit such popular enjoyments as are consistent with the sacredness of the day. It is well known, however, that the tendency is to rush far beyond the bounds of necessity and propriety, and to allege these reasons only as an excuse for virtually ignoring the sacredness of the day altogether. But no community can afford to have either gain or amusement at such a cost. To turn the Lord's Day into a day of toil is a blighting curse to a country; to turn it into a day of dissipation would be worse. We earnestly appeal, therefore, to all Catholics without distinction, not only to take no part in any movement tending toward a relaxation of the observance of Sunday, but to use their influence and power as citizens to resist in the opposite direction.

There is one way of profaning the Lord's Day, which is so prolific of evil results, that we consider it our duty to utter against it a special condemnation. This is the practice of selling beer or other liquors on Sunday, or of frequenting places where they are sold. This practice tends more than any other to turn the Day of the Lord into a day of dissipation, to use it as an occasion for breeding intemperance. While we hope that Sunday laws on this point will not be relaxed, but even more rigidly enforced, we implore all Catholics, for the love of God and of country, never to take part in such Sunday traffic, nor to patronize or countenance it. And we not only direct the attention of all pastors to the repression of this abuse, but we also call upon them to induce all of their flocks that may be engaged in the sale of liquors to abandon as soon as they can the dangerous traffic, and to embrace a more becoming way of making a living.

And here it behooves us to remind our workingmen—the bone and sinew of the people, and the specially beloved children of the Church—that if they wish to observe Sunday as they ought, they must keep away from drinking places on Saturday night. Carry your wages home to your families, where they rightfully belong. Turn a deaf ear, therefore, to every temptation; and then Sunday will be a bright day for all the family. How much better this than to make it a day of sin for yourselves, and of gloom and wretchedness for your homes, by a Saturday night's folly or debauch. No wonder that the Prelates of the Second Plenary Council declared that "the most shocking scandals which we have to deplore spring from intemperance." No wonder that they gave a special approval to the zeal of those who, the better to avoid excess, or in order to give bright example, pledge themselves to total abstinence. Like them we invoke a blessing on the cause of temperance, and on all who are laboring for its advancement in a true Christian spirit. Let the exertions of our Catholic Temperance Societies meet with the hearty cooperation of pastors and people, and not only will they go far towards strangling the monstrous evil of intemperance, but they will also put a powerful check on the desecration of the Lord's Day, and on the evil influences now striving for its total profanation.

Let all our people "remember to keep holy the Lord's Day." Let them make it not only a day of rest, but also a day of prayer. Let them sanctify it by assisting at the adorable Sacrifice of the Mass. Besides the privilege of the morning Mass, let them also give their souls the sweet enjoyment of the Vesper service and the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. See that the children not only hear Mass, but also attend the Sunday-school. It will help

them to grow up more practical Catholics. In country places, and especially in those which the priest cannot visit every Sunday, the Sunday-school ought to be the favorite place of reunion for young and old. It will keep them from going astray, and will strengthen them in the faith. How many children have been lost to the Church in country districts, because parents neglected to see that they observed the Sunday properly at home and at Sunday-school, and allowed them to fall under dangerous influences!

FORBIDDEN SOCIETIES.

One of the most striking characteristics of our times is the universal tendency to band together in societies for the promotion of all sorts of purposes. This tendency is the natural outgrowth of an age of popular rights and representative institutions. It is also in accordance with the spirit of the Church, whose aim, as indicated by her name Catholic, is to unite all mankind in brotherhood. It is consonant also with the spirit of Christ, who came to break down all walls of division, and to gather all in the one family of the one heavenly Father.

But there are few good things which have not their counterfeits, and few tendencies which have not their dangers. It is obvious to any reflecting mind that men form bad and rash as well as good and wise designs; and that they may band together for carrying out evil or dangerous as well as laudable and useful purposes. And this does not necessarily imply deliberate malice, because, while it is unquestionably true that there are powers at work in the world which deliberately antagonize the cause of Christian truth and virtue, still the evil or the danger of purposes and associations need not always spring from so bad a root. Honest but weak and erring human nature is apt to be so taken up with one side of a question as to do injustice to the other; to be so enamored of favorite principles as to carry them to unjustifiable extremes; to be so intent upon securing some laudable end as to ignore the rules of prudence, and bring about ruin instead of restoration. But no intention, no matter how honest, can make lawful what is unlawful. For it is a fundamental rule of Christian morals that "evil must not be done that good may come of it," and "the end can never justify the means," if the means are evil. Hence it is the evident duty of every reasonable man, before allowing himself to be drawn into any society, to make sure that both its ends and its means are consistent with truth, justice, and conscience.

In making such a decision, every Catholic ought to be convinced that his surest guide is the Church of Christ. She has in her custody the sacred deposit of Christian truth and morals; she has the experience of all ages and all nations; she has at heart the true welfare of mankind; she has the perpetual guidance of the Holy Ghost in her authoritative decisions. In her teaching and her warnings, therefore, we are sure to hear the voice of wisdom, prudence, justice, and charity. From the hill-top of her Divine mission and her world-wide experience, she sees events and their consequences far more clearly than they who are down in the tangled plain of daily life. She has seen associations that were once praiseworthy become pernicious by change of circumstances. She has seen others, which won the admiration of the world by their early achievements, corrupted by power or passion or evil guidance, and she has been forced to condemn them. She has beheld associations which had their origin in the spirit of the Ages of Faith, transformed by lapse of time, and loss of faith, and the manipulation of designing leaders, into the open or hidden enemies of religion and human weal. Thus our

Holy Father Leo XIII. has lately shown that the Masonic and kindred societies,—although the offspring of the ancient Guilds, which aimed at sanctifying trades and tradesmen with the blessings of religion; and although retaining, perhaps, in their "ritual," much that tells of the religiousness of their origin; and although in some countries still professing entire friendliness toward the Christian religion,—have nevertheless already gone so far, in many countries, as to array themselves in avowed hostility against Christianity, and against the Catholic Church as its embodiment; that they virtually aim at substituting a world-wide fraternity of their own, for the universal brotherhood of Jesus Christ, and at disseminating mere Naturalism for the supernatural revealed religion bestowed upon mankind by the Saviour of the world. He has shown, too, that even in countries where they are as yet far from acknowledging such purposes, they nevertheless have in them the germs, which, under favorable circumstances, would inevitably blossom forth in similar results. The Church, consequently, forbids her children to have any connection with such societies, because they are either an open evil to be shunned or a hidden danger to be avoided. She would fail in her duty if she did not speak the word of warning, and her children would equally fail in theirs, if they did not heed it.

Whenever, therefore, the Church has spoken authoritatively with regard to any society, her decision ought to be final for every Catholic. He ought to know that the Church has not acted hastily or unwisely, or mistakenly; he should be convinced that any worldly advantages which he might derive from his membership of such society, would be a poor substitute for the membership, the sacraments, and the blessings of the Church of Christ; he should have the courage of his religious convictions, and stand firm to faith and conscience. But if he be inclined or asked to join a society on which the Church has passed no sentence, then let him, as a reasonable and Christian man, examine into it carefully, and not join the society until he is satisfied as to its lawful character.

There is one characteristic which is always a strong presumption against a society, and that is secrecy. Our Divine Lord Himself has laid down the rule: "Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God."[1] When, therefore, associations veil themselves in secrecy and darkness, the presumption is against them, and it rests with them to prove that there is nothing evil in them.

But if any society's obligation be such as to bind its members to secrecy, even when rightly questioned by competent authority, then such a society puts itself outside the limits of approval; and no one can be a member of it and at the same time be admitted to the sacraments of the Catholic Church. The same is true of any organization that binds its members to a promise of blind obedience—to accept in advance and to obey whatsoever orders, lawful or unlawful, that may emanate from its chief authorities; because such a promise is contrary both to reason and conscience. And if a society works or plots, either openly or in secret, against the Church, or against lawful authorities, then to be a member of it is to be excluded from the membership of the Catholic Church.

These authoritative rules, therefore, ought to be the guide of all Catholics

[1] John iii. 20, 21.

in their relations with societies. No Catholic can conscientiously join, or continue in, a body in which he knows that any of these condemned features exist. If he has joined it in good faith and the objectionable features become known to him afterwards, or if any of these evil elements creep into a society which was originally good, it becomes his duty to leave it at once. And even if he were to suffer loss or run risk by leaving such a society or refusing to join it, he should do his duty and brave the consequences regardless of human considerations.

To these laws of the Church, the justice of which must be manifest to all impartial minds, we deem it necessary to add the following admonition of the Second Plenary Council:[1] "Care must be taken lest workingmen's societies, under the pretext of mutual assistance and protection, should commit any of the evils of condemned societies; and lest the members should be induced by the artifices of designing men to break the laws of justice, by withholding labor to which they are rightfully bound, or by otherwise unlawfully violating the rights of their employers."

But while the Church is thus careful to guard her children against whatever is contrary to Christian duty, she is no less careful that no injustice should be done to any association, however unintentionally. While therefore the Church, before prohibiting any society, will take every precaution to ascertain its true nature, we positively forbid any pastor, or other ecclesiastic, to pass sentence on any association, or to impose ecclesiastical penalties or disabilities on its members without the previous explicit authorization of the rightful authorities.

CATHOLIC SOCIETIES.

It is not enough for Catholics to shun bad or dangerous societies, they ought to take part in good and useful ones. If there ever was a time when merely negative goodness would not suffice, such assuredly is the age in which we live. This is pre-eminently an age of action, and what we need to-day is active virtue and energetic piety. Again and again has the voice of the Vicar of Christ been heard, giving approval and encouragement to many kinds of Catholic associations, not only as a safeguard against the allurements of dangerous societies, but also as a powerful means of accomplishing much of the good that our times stand in need of. Not only should the pastors of the Church be hard at work in building up "the spiritual house,"[2] "the tabernacle of God with men,"[3] but every hand among the people of God should share in the labor.

In the first place, we hope that in every parish in the land there is some sodality or confraternity to foster piety among the people. We therefore heartily endorse anew all approbations previously given to our many time-honored and cherished confraternities, such as those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of the Blessed Sacrament, and of the Blessed Virgin.

Next come the various associations for works of Christian zeal and charity: the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, and the Holy Childhood, than which there are none more deserving; societies for the support of Catholic education; Christian doctrine societies for the work of Sunday-schools; societies for improving the condition of the poor, among which stands pre-eminent the Society of St. Vincent de Paul; church-debt societies; societies for supplying poor churches with vestments and other altar requirements; local

[1] No. 519. [2] I. Pet. ii. 5. [3] Apoc. xxi. 3.

sanctuary societies; and other methods of uniting the efforts of the people of the parish for useful and holy purposes. It ought to be the comfort and the honest pride of every Catholic to take an active part in these good works; and if any are hindered from contributing a portion of their time and labor, they should contribute as liberally as they can out of their pecuniary resources.

Then there are associations for the checking of immorality, prominent among which are our Catholic Temperance Societies. These should be encouraged and aided by all who deplore the scandal given and the spiritual ruin wrought by intemperance. It is a mistake to imagine that such societies are made up of the reformed victims of intemperance. They should be, and we trust that they everywhere are largely composed of zealous Catholics who never were tainted by that vice, but who mourn over the great evil and are energetically endeavoring to correct it.

We likewise consider as worthy of particular encouragement associations for the promotion of healthful social union among Catholics,—and especially those whose aim is to guard our Catholic young men against dangerous influences, and to supply them with the means of innocent amusement and mental culture. It is obvious that our young men are exposed to the greatest dangers, and therefore need the most abundant helps. Hence, in the spirit of our Holy Father Leo XIII., we desire to see the number of thoroughly Catholic and well-organized associations for their benefit greatly increased, especially in our large cities; we exhort pastors to consider the formation and careful direction of such societies as one of their most important duties; and we appeal to our young men to put to good profit the best years of their lives, by banding together, under the direction of their pastors, for mutual improvement and encouragement in the paths of faith and virtue.

And in order to acknowledge the great amount of good that the "Catholic Young Men's National Union" has already accomplished, to promote the growth of the Union and to stimulate its members to greater efforts in the future, we cordially bless their aims and endeavors and recommend the Union to all our Catholic young men.

We also esteem as a very important element in practical Catholicity, the various forms of Catholic beneficial societies and kindred associations of Catholic workingmen. It ought to be, and we trust is everywhere their aim to encourage habits of industry, thrift, and sobriety; to guard the members against the dangerous attractions of condemned or suspicious organizations; and to secure the faithful practice of their religious duties, on which their temporal as well as their eternal welfare so largely depends.

With paternal affection we bestow our blessing upon all those various forms of combined Catholic action for useful and holy purposes. We desire to see their number multiplied and their organization perfected. We beseech them to remember that their success and usefulness must rest in a great measure upon their fidelity to the spirit of the Church, and on their guarding carefully against influences that might make them disloyal. The more closely pastors and people are united in good works, the more abundantly will those associations be blessed and their ends accomplished, the more perfectly will all Christians be united in fraternal charity, and the more widely and firmly will the Kingdom of Christ on the earth be established.

HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The duties of a Christian begin with his own household and his own parish; but they do not end there. The charity and zeal in his heart must be like that in the heart of the Church, whose very name is Catholic,—like that in the heart of Christ, who "died for all men, and gave Himself a redemption for all."[1] The Divine commission to the Church stands forever: "Go, teach all nations; preach the Gospel to every creature";[2] and every one who desires the salvation of souls should yearn for its fulfillment, and consider it a privilege to take part in its realization. The more we appreciate the gift of faith, the more must we long to have it imparted to others. The heart of every true Catholic must glow as he reads of the heroic labors of our missionaries among heathen nations in every part of the world, and especially among the Indian tribes of our country. The missionary spirit is one of the glories of the Church and one of the chief characteristics of Christian zeal.

In nearly all European countries there are Foreign Mission Colleges, and also associations of the faithful for the support of the missions by their contributions. Hitherto we have had to strain every nerve in order to carry on the missions of our own country, and we were unable to take any important part in aiding the missions abroad. But we must beware lest our local burdens should make our zeal narrow and uncatholic. There are hundreds of millions of souls in heathen lands to whom the light of the Gospel has not yet been carried, and their condition appeals to the charity of every Christian heart. Among our own Indian tribes, for whom we have a special responsibility, there are still many thousands in the same darkness of heathenism, and the missions among our thousands of Catholic Indians must equally look to our charity for support. Moreover, out of the six millions of our colored population there is a very large multitude who stand sorely in need of Christian instruction and missionary labor; and it is evident that in the poor dioceses in which they are mostly found it is most difficult to bestow on them the care they need, without the generous co-operation of our Catholic people in more prosperous localities. We have therefore urged the establishment of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in every parish in which it is not yet erected, and also ordered a collection to be made yearly in all the dioceses, for the foreign missions and the missions among our Indians and Negroes. We have done this through a deep sense of duty, and we trust that our noble-hearted people will not regard it as a burden imposed on them, but as an opportunity presented to them of co-operating in a work which must be specially dear to the Heart of our Divine Saviour.

These are the leading matters, venerable and beloved brethren, which have engaged our attention during this Council. The objects of our deliberations have been the same that have occupied the energies of the Church and her pastors ever since the days of the Apostles,—namely, the extension of the kingdom of God, the building up the Body of Christ, the giving greater "glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will," by shedding abroad more abundantly the blessings of religion, and the graces of redemption. Our legislation is not intended to impose burdens or limitations upon you, but, on the contrary, to enlarge and to secure to you "the liberty of the children of God." The path of duty and virtue is clearly marked

[1] II. Cor. v. 15; I. Tim. ii. 6. [2] Mat. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15.

and pointed out, not to restrain your freedom, but that you may journey safely, that you may live wisely and virtuously, that you may have happiness temporal and eternal.

And now we write you these things, that you may be partners in our solicitude, that every heart may cry out, "Thy Kingdom come," that every hand may be active in establishing and extending it. Accept with willing and loving minds these lessons which spring from hearts full of love for you, and entirely consecrated to your service. Give joy to us and to our Divine Lord by putting them faithfully in practice. And may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, descend upon you abundantly, and abide with you forever.

THE PIONEER OF THE FAITH

IN THE NEW WORLD.

The Mission of the Cross-Bearer.

TIME OF PREPARATION.

The Azores Islands were discovered in 1448 by Dom Gonzalo Vello, and on Corvo, one of the islands of this group, a statue was found, with an inscription on the pedestal in strange characters that none could decipher. This statue pointed westward with its right hand, as if to show that there the great discovery was to be made. The next year Anthony Nolli, a Genoese navigator, discovered the Cape Verde Islands. There was at that time in Europe a thoughtful, studious man, making marine charts and maps for sea captains, selling books of geography to students, though doubtless studying well every book before he parted with it, for many of his books still preserved are covered with his notes

This man of Providence was Christopher Columbus whose first name signifies "Cross-Bearer" and his second name "the Dove."

Christopher was born in a house belonging to his father Dominic outside the walls of Genoa, and was baptized in the hillside church of Santo Stefano di Arco, by the Benedictines who resided there.

He was the eldest son, and the hope of the house. His father sought to give him an opportunity to acquire knowledge greater than his own home afforded him. The commencement of an education had been laid in Genoa, and before he reached his tenth year Chris-

topher was sent to Pavia. Here some one attached to the University for three years instructed the boy, who evidently showed aptness for learning, and diligence. At his early age he could not have followed the course of the University, but he acquired the rudiments, a knowledge of Latin, and some insight into mathematics. But he was naturally a student and a lover of books.

Back again to the narrow street of Genoa, where his father's place of business was, came the boy, his imagination fired by the glimpse into learning, the open sea beckoning him to its life of adventure and freedom. Obedient to his father, whom he ever honored through life, he took his place in the workshop and sought to mould himself to the quiet life of commerce. But he yearned for action in the career where his grand-uncle was already famous.

At fourteen he was already on shipboard. Docile, prompt, eager to learn, eager to advance, he was one to win his way with his commander and with all. His voyages carried him over most of the Mediterranean, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Archipelago. That sea was at that time swept by corsairs which sailed under the Crescent, and made war on all Christian flags. Every merchant-ship went armed, and a sea-fight was often the incident of a voyage. Young Christopher in one of these engagements received a deep wound, which, though healed at the time, broke out in his later years and endangered his life.

In 1459 Christopher had become an officer under his grand-uncle, who commanded a fleet for King René, of Anjou, then seeking to win his kingdom of Naples. It is evident that young Christopher did his duty well, for René sent him in command of a vessel to cut out a galley from Tunis, which had become notorious for its ravages on Christian commerce.

That his love of adventure and discovery was stimulated by a high religious purpose is shown by the following words of the Holy Father:

"There are, without doubt, many men of hardihood and full of experience who, before Christopher Columbus and after him, explored with persevering efforts unknown lands across seas still more unknown."

"The eminently distinctive point in Columbus is, that, in crossing immense expanses of the ocean, he followed an object more grand and more elevated than the others. This does not doubtless say that he was not in any way influenced by the very praiseworthy desire to be master of science, to well deserve the approval of society, or that he despised the glory whose stimulant is ordinarily more sensitive to elevated minds, or that he was not at all looking to his personal interests. But above all these human reasons, that of religion was uppermost by a great deal in him, and it was this without any doubt which sustained his spirit and his will, and which frequently, in the midst of extreme difficulties, filled him with consolation."—*Pope Leo XIII., on Christopher Columbus.*

A few years after this we find him on the Atlantic, commanding a vessel in a Genoese fleet, under Colombo il Mozo. His native State was at war with the sister republic of Venice, and they were on the lookout for some rich vessels of the Queen of the Adriatic. They finally came upon them between Lisbon and Cape Saint Vincent. It was a sad spectacle to see Italians thus arrayed against each other, but, as is usual in such wars, the feeling was intense on both sides. All day long the Venetians gallantly resisted the attack of the Genoese. Christopher Columbus had grappled one of the Venetians, and in the hand to hand fight on her deck had nearly forced her to yield, when she took

fire. In a moment both vessels were in flames. But the ships were so bound together by spars and cordage, as well as grappling-irons, that Columbus was unable to disengage his vessel from her burning antagonist. The combat ceased, and as the fires would soon communicate to the powder, the recent antagonists plunged into the sea, the only rivalry being to reach the shore, which a line of breakers showed them some five miles distant. Columbus struck out manfully, spent as he was with the terrible fight, but in his exhausted state he would never have reached the shore had not Providence thrown in his way a large oar, by the aid of which he at last reached land, to turn and look back on the sea, beneath which lay all that remained of the noble vessel he so lately commanded.

At Lisbon, which he had thus strangely reached, he found his brother Bartholomew making and selling charts and dealing in books of navigation, the great Prince Henry having made Lisbon a resort of experienced naval men. The society of these men was very attractive to Christopher, who, joining his brother in business, made it lucrative enough to enable him to send remittances to his father, whose commercial affairs had not prospered. While perfecting his knowledge of geography and arriving at the final theory as to transatlantic voyages, he married Doña Philippa Perestrello, daughter of an Italian navigator who had made many voyages of exploration and died Governor of Porto Santo, one of the Madeira Islands. The papers of this navigator aided him still more, and King Alphonsus, at one of his audiences, showed Columbus some enormous reeds that had been driven across the Atlantic. As early as 1474, we know, by letters of the celebrated Italian cosmographer Toscanelli, that Columbus had already laid before him his plan for reaching Cathay by sailing westward, and that his mo-

tive was the extention of Christianity. But he was not yet ready to submit his plan to the world. This he did in 1476. Like a true son of Genoa he first proposed it to that republic; but they shrunk from undertaking to test it. Venice viewed it with no greater favor.

Discouraged at this, Columbus, weary of the shore and study, from time to time made short voyages, with some extending to the German Ocean and to the North Atlantic, even beyond Iceland.

At last there came an opportunity to lay his favorite plan before the King of Portugal, who began to show an interest in new discoveries. The plan of Columbus was referred to a committee of learned men, one of them being a cosmographer of some note. They rejected it as unwise; but the King favored it so much, that listening to unworthy advice, he secretly sent off a vessel to test the soundness of the views of the Genoese navigator. Providence did not permit treachery to succeed. Columbus, crushed with disappointment and afflicted by the death of his faithful, loving wife, fled from Lisbon in 1484, taking by the hand his son Diego, and was soon once more in Genoa.

But he could not rest. His faith in his plan was intense, and he was no longer of an age when he could waste time in inaction. Again he endeavored to enlist the Republic of Genoa, and failing he set out with young Diego for Spain, entering it unheralded and unknown.

A little out of the petty seaport town of Palos, in Southern Spain, on a high promontory looking over the sea, nestled in the pines that clothe its summit stood a little Franciscan convent, built on the ruins of an old pagan shrine. At the door of this rambling old-time structure Columbus one day knocked, as many a wayfarer did, to ask a little refreshment for his son. The Guardian of the Convent, Friar John Perez de Marchena, entered as he was admitted, and, struck by

the whole bearing of the stranger, asked him of the object of his journey. From one in his guise, the reply was strange enough. He was from Italy on his way to Court to lay an important plan before the Kings, for so Spaniards always called Ferdinand and Isabella, each being monarch of a separate state.

If Padre Marchena was surprised to find his strange guest a man of such ability and enterprising mind, Columbus was no less delighted to find in the Guardian of the little convent of Santa Maria de la Rabida, not only a kind-hearted man, but one of great learning, scientific attainments, and an excellent cosmographer, prized especially by Queen Isabella for his wonderful acquirements and his solid piety and humility, which induced him to prefer hiding his abilities at Palos, rather than display them in the sunshine of the Court.

A friendship was at once formed, close and strong, between the two men, and the deep religious feeling of Columbus, and his studies, made their union lasting. Columbus and his son became the welcome guests of the friars, and in this haven Columbus enjoyed a repose to which he had long been a stranger. Here, guided by this learned man, he extended his studies, and spent much time in prayer. At last, with a higher, nobler courage, with his plan more firm than ever, and an array of learning to maintain it, he set out for the court, bearing a letter strongly commending his project to a man of great influence with the sovereigns. With the freedom of a friend this good man obtained and handed him a sum of money to meet his expenses, and crowned his friendly acts by taking on himself the care of young Diego's education and support. Columbus now bent his way to Cordova, to renew proposals that had been elsewhere rejected.

"It is an entirely special reason for which we believe we should commemorate in a grateful spirit this immortal event. It is that Columbus is one of us. When one considers with what motive above all he undertook the plan of exploring the dark sea, and with what object he endeavored to realize this plan, one cannot doubt that the Catholic faith superlatively inspired the enterprise and its execution."
—*Pope Leo XIII., on Christopher Columbus.*

THE DAWN OF SUCCESS.

The condition of Spain at this period was a peculiar one, not easily understood without a knowledge of its past history.

When the Roman Empire fell, under the attack of the hordes of barbarians who overran it, and planted new kingdoms in various parts, Spain fell into the hands of the Goths, a warlike race who sprang from what is now called Sweden. These Goths became Christians and ruled over Spain for many years, till in the year 711, the Saracens or Moors who had embraced the religion of Mohammed and conquered all the northern part of Africa, arrived at the straits between Spain and Africa, then called the Pillars of Hercules, but was now to be called Gibraltar, the mountain of Tarifa, one of their leaders.

It depended now on the Goths, whether the religion of Mohammed should enter Europe, or be checked. The Goths were brave, but their king was a wicked tyrant, and his nobles were so incensed at him that some of them actually invited in the Saracens, who reduced all Christians to slavery, giving them no choice between the Koran and the sword, death or the religion of Mohammed.

Roderic, the last of the Gothic kings, met the Saracens in battle in

Xerez and after a bloody engagement was totally defeated and slain, though many believed that he escaped and was shut up, doing penance in some cave or some lonely island, to reappear one day and recover his kingdom.

But the Gothic monarchy fell at Xerez. The Saracens swept over Spain, reducing it all to their power. Only a few brave Christians, under a prince named Pelayo, retiring to the mountains of Asturias, defied the Saracens and after defeating them in several battles secured their independence.

Meanwhile, the Saracens established kingdoms, which ruled with great splendor and magnificence, cultivating art and science. But the little Christian kingdom of Pelayo gained strength, and other Christian kingdoms were gradually formed as they recovered part of the land from the Saracens. Of these the most important were Aragon and Castile, and on the Atlantic, that of Portugal. At last, Ferdinand, king of Aragon, married Isabella, Queen of Castile in her own right, and united the two great kingdoms of Spain. But the people were jealous. Each State remained independent of the other; Ferdinand led the troops of Aragon, and Isabella those of Castile, in the war they undertook to overthrow Granada, the last of the Moorish kingdoms. They were not styled King and Queen of Spain, but the "Catholic Kings."

It was to their court at Cordova that Columbus proceeded: but the Moorish war absorbed all thoughts, and Isabella, though favorably inclined, could promise to aid him only when the war should be ended. His plans were laid before a committee of learned men, none of them however navigators or of great geographical knowledge. They decided against it. Still Columbus was kindly treated and employment given him suited to his abilities. He married again and

remained for six years in vain urging his favorite project. Then he gave it up, and returning to Palos, announced to his friend Padre Marchena his intention of going to France. The good friar wrote to Queen Isabella urging her not to lose so great an opportunity. One of her officers, Luis de Santangel, warmly espoused his cause, and when Granada fell, on the 30th of December, 1491, all seemed to promise a speedy success. But when they began to treat the matter seriously with Columbus they took alarm at the magnitude of his claims. He was to be Admiral of the Ocean, Viceroy of all new found lands, and to receive one-tenth of all the gold, precious stones and other commodities exported from them. At last all fell through, and Columbus started for Cordova to take leave of his family before proceeding to France.

Then Queen Isabella decided to send him out on his voyage of exploration, if she had to pledge her jewels to obtain the money. An officer was soon galloping after Columbus. On the 30th of April a patent was issued, creating him Grand Admiral of the Ocean, Viceroy of all the islands and mainland he might discover, and making the dignities hereditary in his family. The little fleet of three vessels was to be fitted out at Palos, but it was not got ready except with great difficulty, so foolhardy did the project seem to the shipowners and seamen of that maritime place. At last, by the aid of Martin Alonzo Pinzon, who had seen at Rome a map showing land beyond the Atlantic, and had faith in the project, the vessels were equipped.

An old heavy carrack, furnished by the town of Palos, was named by Columbus the Santa Maria; it was old, but still serviceable, and became his flagship. The Pinta and the Niña, the latter belonging to the Pinzons, completed the important squadron, which carried in

all a hundred and twenty men, royal officers, physicians, and a goldsmith to test what might seem to be precious metals. In this party there were an Englishman and an Irishman. After piously attending divine service in the chapel of La Rabida, they moved in procession to the shore and embarked. Early on the 3d of August, 1492, Columbus, having completed all his arrangements, and commended his undertaking to the Almighty, in his friend's little church on the shore, stepped on board his flagship, and hoisting his flag gave the order to sail. He steered at once to the Canaries. Here he made some necessary repairs on the Pinta, and altered the sails of the Niña. Here too he heard that three Portuguese vessels had been sent out to capture him and defeat his expedition. But he eluded them, and his flotilla went boldly into the unexplored sea. That soon assumed a character new to the oldest mariners; and what perplexed Columbus sorely, the needle in the mariner's compass no longer pointed due north, but inclined westward. For a time all went well. Twice the cry of land was raised by Pinzon, claiming the pension promised by Queen Isabella, but it was a mere delusion. The men grew sullen, mutinous and threatening. The life of Columbus was in danger. At last he stood alone. On the 7th of October, led by the Pinzons, the men of all the vessels rising in arms demanded that Columbus should abandon his mad project and sail back. Never did his greatness of soul display itself more nobly. He awed them into submission. He had started to go to the Indies and he intended to pursue the voyage till, by the help of God he found it.

That night was spent in watching, and as Columbus urged, in prayer. At ten o'clock, as he stood on the poop of the Santa Maria, he discerned

a light moving in the darkness. The Pinta then ran ahead, and at two in the morning a sailor on board that caravel, John Rodriguez Bermejo, discovered land. The cannon booming over the western wave announced the glad tidings, and Columbus, kneeling, intoned the TE DEUM, which was chanted with heartfelt joy. The ships now lay to in a reef-harbor of immense size, till morning should enable them to approach land safely.

"If he had not inspired himself from a cause superior to human interests, where, then, would he have drawn the constancy and the strength of soul to support what he was obliged to the end to endure and to submit to—that is to say, the unpropitious advice of the learned people, the repulses of princes, the tempests of the furious ocean, the continual watches during which he more than once risked losing his sight? To that adding the combats sustained against the barbarians, the infidelities of his friends, of his companions, the villainous conspirators, the perfidiousness of the envious, the calumnies of the traducers, the chains with which, after all, though innocent, he was loaded."—*Pope Leo XIII., on Christopher Columbus.*

On Friday, October 12, the rising sun discovered to their eyes an island clad in verdant groves of the mangrove tree; a lake whose clear waters flashed in the morning sun lay near the inviting shore. No sight could be more charming to men whom long absence from land had driven almost to frenzy. Columbus, now flushed with pardonable pride at the triumphant success, arrayed in a scarlet mantle, and bearing the royal standard with the figure of Christ Crucified, landed in his cutter, as did the commanders of the other vessels. Planting the cross he knelt to adore the Almighty, kissing the earth to which His hand had guided the vessels. Uttering a prayer of singular

beauty, which history has preserved, he rose, and named the island San Salvador, Holy Saviour. Then drawing his sword he formally took possession in the name of Queen Isabella for her kingdoms of Castile and Leon.

The island was called by the natives Guanahani, and now bears the name of Turk's Island. And from Hawk's Nest Reef Harbor there burst on the view of the great discoverer so many islands around, that he knew not which to visit.

Some of the party now wandered around, full of wonder at strange plants, and flowers, and birds. Others with axes shaped a large cross. No human beings were seen, but at last a few naked forms appeared and cautiously drew near. The Europeans in their dress and arms were a strange spectacle to them, as they with their copper tint, their beardless faces, their want of all clothing, were to the Spaniards. A friendly intercourse began, and all was gladness.

Columbus planted the cross where he had set up the royal banner, and intoned hymns to thank God in a Christian spirit. Then continuing his voyage, he discovered several other islands, to which he gave the names of Santa Maria de la Concepcion, Isabella, in honor of the Queen, Fernandina, in honor of the King. Then he reached the great island, Cuba, which he named Juana, in honor of the daughter of Isabella, and finally, Hispaña, which, however, retains its Indian name, Hayti.

While exploring this maze of islands the Santa Maria stranded, and became a total wreck. The great discoverer then erected a little fort on the shore of Hayti, in the territory of the friendly Cacique Guacanagari, and leaving in it forty-two of his best men, sailed homeward in the Niña and Pinzon in the Pinta.

Terrible storms were encountered, and Columbus, fearing that he should never see Europe again, drew up an account, which he enclosed in a cask, in a cake of wax, and set adrift. At last, however, the Niña reached the Azores, but the Portuguese treacherously seized some of his men who landed to offer up their prayers in a chapel by the sea. With some difficulty he obtained their release, and continuing his voyage, on the 4th of March he was off the mouth of the Tagus, and, not without great risk, succeeded in bringing his storm-racked caravel into the roadstead of Rastello. Being thus driven into the waters of Portugal he wrote to the King, who at once invited him to Court. In spite of his chagrin at his own want of spirit in declining the offers made by Columbus, John II. now received him as he would a prince. Columbus had written letters to two officers of the Court of Queen Isabella, as well as to the sovereigns themselves. He was however anxious to reach them in person. At Palos the crew of the Niña were received as men rescued from the grave. To add to the general joy, in the midst of their exultation the Pinta, Pinzon's vessel, came slowly up the bay. It had been driven to the Bay of Biscay, whence Pinzon had written to the Court.

After fulfilling at La Rabida and other shrines vows made amid their perils and storms, Columbus with some of his party proceeded to Barcelona by way of Seville, bearing with him in his triumphal progress seven natives of the new-found world, with gold and animals, birds and plants, all alike strange to the eyes of Europe.

"At whatever coast he approaches, he has nothing more as his first idea than the planting on its shore the sacred sign of the cross; In the same way, when he institutes the Spanish colony, he causes it

to be commenced by the construction of a temple, where he first provides that the popular fêtes shall be celebrated by august ceremonies.

"Here, then, is what Columbus aimed at and what he accomplished when he went in search, over so great expanse of sea and of land, of regions up to that time unexplored and uncultivated, but whose civilization, renown, and riches were to rapidly attain that immense development which we see to-day."—*Pope Leo XIII., on Columbus.*

THE RETURN IN TRIUMPH.

The fifteenth of April, 1493, was a glorious day for Barcelona. The whole city was astir. The great discoverer of a New World was to enter the city and be solemnly received by Ferdinand and Isabella. Beneath a canopy of cloth of gold, on two thrones, sat the Queen of Castile and the King of Aragon: and on a rich seat by them the Prince Royal. An arm-chair awaited him, who now approached. At the shouts of the people and the sound of music all eyes turned towards the city gates, and erelong the banner of the expedition was seen by the courtiers around the throne, as the procession made its slow way through the wondering crowd. The sailors of the Niña, with the strange products of the New World, trees and shrubs, fruits and aromatics, rude golden articles, the arms of the natives, birds, animals, and, strangest perhaps of all, several Indians wondering and wondered at. Richly attired, but modest, Columbus advanced. The Sovereigns arose from their thrones to meet him, and extended their hands to welcome the great Discoverer. He bent his knee in reverence, but they would not permit it. Isabella bade him be seated.

and covered as a grandee of Spain. Then at their request he made his report of that wonderful voyage and explained how strange and new the islands were in their people, and their productions. All listened with breathless attention to this unlooked-for result of what had so long been regarded as a dream. It was the triumph of Columbus, the triumph of Isabella.

When in that spirit of religion which influenced him and made him deem himself specially raised by God to bear the name of Christ to the New World, he expatiated on the field thrown open to Christianity, all were moved to tears.

Columbus' own letters, and letters of Peter Martyr and others spread the news through Europe. Printing was then fifty years old and the letter was printed in Spanish, in the strange gothic letter of the period. Of this book only one copy is now known, and we give a fac-simile of a page, that our young readers may see what printing was in that day, and what the first book in American history resembled. Latin was, however, the universal language, and the letter of Columbus to Sanchez, translated into Latin, was printed again and again.

The favor of the rulers of Spain did not end in the pomp of the reception. Substantial honors were bestowed on Columbus, and a large and well-equipped fleet was at once prepared in which he was to carry over a large body of settlers, domestic animals, and all necessary for occupying the territory. The Grand Admiral with a stately retinue proceeded to Cadiz, and on the 25th of September, embarked in his second voyage in the Maria Galanta, with two other large caracs and fourteen caravels. Among those who sailed with him were Padre Marchena and the illustrious Las Casas. He reached

Dominica on the 3d of November, and soon after an island to which he gave the name of his flagship, Maria Galanta. Keeping on he discovered and named others of the Windward Islands, and then reached Porto Rico, called by the natives Boriquen. When he arrived at St. Domingo he found his fort in ruins. His men had all been massacred. Insubordination had broken out and all had perished in various ways, though Guacanagri, true to Columbus, had endeavored to save them. Saddened as he was at this news, Columbus proceeded to found, at a suitable spot, the city of Isabella, the first European town in the New World. When the works in this city were well advanced, he sent back part of his fleet to Spain, and establishing a post further inland, proceeded on his voyage of discovery, visiting Cuba, Jamaica and some smaller islands. Then he gave his whole attention to his settlement, which was in a very distracted condition, many of the settlers being turbulent and mutinous, with but little inclination to any serious work. Columbus, himself regarded with jealousy as a foreigner, had, notwithstanding his high rank as Admiral and Viceroy, great difficulty in establishing order. When he had, as he supposed, placed all on a better footing, he sailed back to Spain in 1496, leaving in command his energetic brother, Bartholomew. On reaching Spain he found that his enemies had not been idle there, and that a strong prejudice had been created against him.

His two successful voyages were now the theme of conversation in Europe: and the courts which had ridiculed his projects and the reward he claimed, now saw their error and sought to retrieve it. Portugal had, we have seen, been the first to attempt to prevent Columbus from succeeding, and now protested against the famous line of demarca-

tion drawn by Pope Alexander VII. between the Spaniards and Portuguese, and against the Papal Bull confirming the Spanish right of discovery.

England, where Bartholomew had pleaded in vain, now determined to attempt a voyage of exploration. It seems strange that the route of St. Brendan was again followed.

In 1496, John Cabot, a Venetian, by long residence if not by birth, was in England, where he had been established for some years. Full of energy he applied to the King, Henry VII., for a patent to seek new lands.

The cautious, money-loving King issued a patent authorizing Cabot and his three sons to search for islands, provinces or regions in the Eastern, Western or Northern seas, and as vassals of the English King to occupy the territory, but they were to bring all the products of the new found lands to the city of Bristol, and pay one-fifth into the royal treasury, a provision very characteristic of a King who in his last will drove a close bargain as to the price of the religious services to be performed after his death.

Under this patent, John Cabot, accompanied by his son Sebastian, sailed from Bristol in May, 1497, with a single ship, to seek a northern passage to China. After a pleasant voyage of what he estimated to be seven hundred leagues, on the 24th day of June, 1497, he reached land at about the fifty-sixth degree of north latitude, among the frozen cliffs of Labrador. He had discovered North America in its most unpromising part. Seeking the northwest passage he ran along the coast for many leagues, planted the standard of England and the lion of St. Mark for Venice. Then he started again across the Atlantic, noticing two islands which he had not time to visit.

This summer trip of three months gave England her claim to North America.

His return gratified all England, from King to peasant, and though it had revealed only a barren land, led to further grants from Henry VII.

This same year there sailed another explorer, and the most fortunate of all, for by a strange accident his name was given to the New World. This was Americus Vesputius, born at Florence, in Italy, in 1451, who had been for some time in Spain directing the commercial affairs of Lorenzo de Pier Francesco, one of the princely family of Medicis. He met Columbus in 1496, and seems to have enjoyed his friendship. In May, 1497, he sailed on a voyage of exploration, and running as he estimated a thousand leagues, passing the islands discovered by Columbus, reached the mainland. It is not easy to determine his course, but he seems to have reached Honduras, and to have coasted north along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico till, doubling the southern cape of Florida, he again emerged on the Atlantic and ran northward for a month along our seaboard, to an excellent harbor where he built a small vessel. Thence he sailed back, reaching Cadiz in October, 1498.

By some, this voyage had been doubted, by others it is supposed to have been along South America. But a more careful examination leads us to the conclusion that to Americus Vesputius is due the honor of being the first to explore the extensive line of coast which our Republic holds, on the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico; and that he did so while the Cabots, starting from the north, were in part examining our Atlantic seaboard.

But while his countrymen were thus revealing to the world the existence of a new and mighty continent, teeming with animal and vege-

table life, rich in all that nature can give, but occupied only by roving bands of savage men, Columbus was detained in Spain by the intrigues of his enemies and by the dull delays of stupid or malicious officials.

It was not till May, 1498, that he so far overcame all these obstacles as to be able again to embark: and in that month he set out on his third and most unhappy voyage.

That same month saw Sebastian Cabot sail from Bristol with two ships, and a number of volunteers eager to share in the perils and romance of the undertaking. He crossed the Atlantic, and in the 55th degree found himself in the midst of icebergs, which threatened him with destruction while they filled all hearts with wonder. In spite of the danger he sailed on, till on the 11th of June he reached an open sea which inspired him with hopes of reaching China: but his men became alarmed and compelled him to seek a milder climate. Running down along the coast he saw the immense shoals of codfish on the banks of Newfoundland, so numerous, some accounts say, that his ship could hardly get through them. Then they began to see inhabitants clad in skins, and opened trade with them. Of his voyage we have unfortunately no detailed accounts. He went south till he was at the latitude of Gibraltar and the longitude of Cuba, probably near Albemarle Sound, whence he steered back to England. In his northerly course he saw the polar bear feeding on fish, and apparently described its contests with the walruses, which it so often attempts to surprise asleep on the ice, but which, almost powerless there, seeks to gain the water and drag the bear down.

Vesputius and Cabot enjoyed lives of honor and respect. Both were frequently employed by monarchs and received substantial marks of favor. Cabot, in the Spanish service, visited Brazil, explored the La

Plata, and was honored by Ferdinand with the title of Pilot Major of Spain, while Emperor Charles V. employed him in new discoveries, and when he returned to England, sought by great offers to induce him to return. But he preferred England and died at Bristol in 1557, enjoying a pension given by Edward VI.

Vesputius was highly appreciated by the Spanish Kings, who knew his skill in cosmography, as geography was then called, and in the preparation of charts, recording the latest discoveries, to guide the ships constantly starting out of Spanish ports. But the King of Portugal for a time obtained his services, and he not only sailed on several Spanish expeditions, but commanded Portuguese fleets in which he explored the South American coast. He, too, held the title of Pilot Major under the Spanish Kings. Some have charged Americus Vesputius with gross injustice to Columbus in robbing him of the honor of discovering the New World by affixing his own name to it. But there is really no ground for this charge, and though the name America was formed from his Christian name, it was not done by him. The thing came about in this way: In 1507 a celebrated geographer named Waldseemuller published at St. Dié, a little town in Lorraine, one of the provinces recently taken from France by Prussia, a little work entitled "Cosmographiæ Introductio," and to it he added an edition of the four voyages of Vesputius, which had fallen into his hands. Not being familiar, it would seem, with the voyages of Columbus, he ascribed all the honor to Vesputius, and on his map first introduced the name America. Of this book there seems to have been a large edition, as it found its way to all parts of Europe, and as the name was more short and convenient than the term used by the Spaniards, "The Indies," it was adopted on maps generally.

In this same eventful year, Vasco de Gama, doubling the Cape of Good Hope, sailed through the Indian Ocean and planted the flag of Portugal on the shore of Hindostan.

On the 30th day of May, 1498, Columbus, for whom Providence had in store its greatest trials, sailed with six caravels from the Port of San Lucar de Barrameda, a Spanish port not far from Seville.

A French fleet lay in wait for him. Steering a southerly course, he touched at Madeira, whence he dispatched three vessels to St. Domingo, under command of his brother-in-law, Pedro de Arana, designing himself, though in ill health, to make a voyage of discovery before proceeding to that island in person. Taking a southwesterly course, he came before long into the region of those tropic calms, where the sun pours down its fatal heat, and not a breath of air seems to ruffle the surface of the ocean. For a week his vessels rolled like logs. Then, when wind came, he steered more northerly, suffering greatly, as the long calm had nearly exhausted their supply of water. Finally, on the last day of July, three mountain-peaks were seen, and to this island Columbus gave the name of Trinidad, in honor of the Trinity.

Near it he perceived a strong current, as if some mighty river were sweeping into the sea. When the tide rose, a still stranger spectacle met his eye; an immense tidal wave, rising as high as his masts, came rolling on, and bearing his caravel up, met the river current, standing like a watery mountain. He was off the mainland of South America, at the mouth of the Orinoco. In memory of his peril, he called it the Dragon's Mouth.

Exploring the coast for some days, he landed on Sunday, and planting a cross, had divine service celebrated. Friendly intercourse was opened with the natives, but Columbus, suffering from gout, and nearly

blind from an affection of the eyes, felt that he must reach his colony in St. Domingo. There, Francisco Roldan, the judge in the colony, had revolted against Bartholomew Columbus, because he sought to protect the Indians from the oppressions of men who sought gold by the most wicked means. Bartholomew had failed to quell the troubles, and even the crews of the vessels sent on from Madeira were won over by the malcontents.

Columbus himself arrived sick, exhausted, and, from the condition of his eyes, unfit for active duties.

He endeavored to conciliate, and pardoning the offenders, allowed all who chose to return to Spain in some vessels then ready to set sail. But they did not go till they had wrung from him humiliating conditions.

He then endeavored to restore peace on the island; but Roldan and his party had driven the Indians to a spirit of retaliation and revenge. While endeavoring to appease these, fresh troubles arose among the settlers, and an attempt was made to assassinate Columbus, and he was on the point of flying with his brothers in a ship from the island.

Well would it have been for him had he done so. His enemies had reached Spain, and given their own version of affairs. The Chamber at Seville, intrusted with the management of affairs beyond the Atlantic, was already strongly prejudiced against Columbus. King Ferdinand, who had never been a warm friend to the great explorer, now declared against him openly. Even Isabella was staggered by the charges against him.

A sudden and terrible blow was prepared for Columbus.

The sovereigns resolved to send over a Commissary to restore

order in the colony. For this post, requiring the highest qualities, they selected a mere tool of his enemies—a soldier unacquainted with the laws, a headstrong, violent man, brutal and unforgiving. This was the Commander Francis de Bobadilla.

While Columbus was absent from the city of San Domingo, engaged in establishing a strong fort at Conception, Bobadilla arrived with two caravels. He announced himself as Commissary sent to judge the rebels, but on landing, read his patents and an ordinance conferring on him the government and judicature of the islands and mainland of the Indies; and an order requiring Columbus to deliver up all the fortresses and public property into his hands. He at once seized not only these but the private property and papers of Columbus, many of which have never since been found.

But he was a little afraid that Columbus might resist, so he sent a Franciscan to induce the Admiral to meet him. Bartholomew was then at Zaragua, and Diego Columbus alone in San Domingo.

Columbus came in good faith, with no force to protect him. Seeing him about to fall into the trap, Bobadilla seized Diego Columbus, put him in irons, and sent him on board a caravel. When Columbus himself arrived, Bobadilla not only refused to see him, but gave orders for his immediate arrest. Thus was the discoverer of the New World, without the charge of a single crime, without investigation, while holding his commission as Viceroy of the Indies, seized, hurried off to a prison, and manacled like a malefactor. No one was allowed to approach him, and no explanation given. Bartholomew was next seized and put in irons on a caravel apart from Diego.

We have seen what the shattered health of Columbus was on reaching San Domingo. Labor and anxiety had worn him down since his

arrival. And now he lay on the stone floor of his dungeon, with very scanty clothing, suffering from pain, and denied any but the coarsest prison fare.

Then Bobadilla went to work to secure depositions from all who had opposed Columbus; and when he had collected enough false charges to give color to his infamous acts, he sent an officer named Vallejo, with a body of soldiers, to bring Columbus from his dungeon.

"Whither do you take me, Vallejo?" asked the great man, who, feeling that no law, human or divine, was respected by his enemies, supposed he was to be led to the scaffold.

"On board the Gorda, your Excellency," replied the young officer, who was not destitute of respect for the illustrious victim.

"Is this true, Vallejo?"

"By the life of your Excellency," replied the young officer, "I swear that I am about to conduct you to the caravel to embark."

With little delay he was carried forth, emaciated, sick, and helpless, and thus in irons borne to the hold of the Gorda, to which his two brothers had been already removed. And early in October the vessel weighed anchor, and he who had just crowned his explorations by discovering the mainland of the New World, was hurried across the Atlantic like a criminal.

When from the deck of the vessel the shores of Hispaniola could no longer be discerned, the officers came to the illustrious man to beg him to allow them to remove his fetters. Columbus refused. They were put upon him in the name of their Sovereigns and he would not violate their orders.

A letter of his to a friend at Court reached there before any report of Bobadilla's, and was at once shown to Queen Isabella. Horror-

struck at the injustice to the great Discoverer, she ordered him and his brothers to be at once set at liberty, and supplied with money to proceed to court. She received him with tears. His conduct was justified, Bobadilla removed, but Ferdinand thwarted his return to the New World.

It was not till May, 1502, that Columbus was able to sail once more out into that ocean which he has made the pathway of the nations. He reached San Domingo, but was not allowed to enter port. To his experienced eye the air was full of portents of a coming tempest. A fleet rode at anchor in the harbor, ready to sail to Spain. It bore the brutal Bobadilla, his greatest enemy, Roldan, and many more who had bitterly persecuted him. They had accomplished their work, and having by every cruelty amassed riches, were now returning to Spain. Forgetting their hostility to him, Columbus warned them not to sail till the storm had passed. To their inexperienced eyes, all was serene. They laughed Columbus to scorn. Forth sailed the gay fleet, but in a moment all changed. The hurricane came on in all its fury, sweeping over sea and land with resistless power. Columbus was equal to the emergency which he had foreseen. Clear as a bell, amid the rattling of the spars and the whistling of the cordage, came his wise orders. His little fleet weathered the storm; but when the wind died away and the sea grew calm, the gay fleet of his enemies had vanished. It had gone down with all their ill-got wealth. Pursuing his voyage of discovery, Columbus reached Honduras and coasted along to Panama. This was his last voyage. Amid severe storms he finally reached Spain, on the 7th of November, 1503. Shattered in health by all that he had undergone, he lay sick at Seville when another blow came, the death of his true friend, Queen Isabella. His health

now rapidly declined. He reached Valladolid, but it was only to die neglected and forgotten in a room at an inn : the walls unadorned except by the chains which bound his limbs on the Gorda, and which he had never allowed out of his sight after that period of suffering. Columbus breathed his last May 20, 1506, surrounded by his sons and a few faithful friends, comforted with the rites of the religion to which he was so devoted in life.

He was buried in the chapel of the Franciscan friars at Valladolid, but his remains were before long transferred to the church of the Carthusian monks in Seville. It had been his wish to be buried in the New World he had discovered, and about the year 1540 the bones of the great Columbus were borne across the Atlantic; they were then deposited in the Cathedral of St. Domingo, in a vault on the right of the high altar. Spain abandoned the island of St. Domingo in 1795, but her officials, when they left the city, took up and conveyed to Havana what were regarded as the bones of Christopher Columbus. A tablet, on which is inscribed his achievements, is still to be seen in the Cathedral at Havana, to mark the spot where they were placed. But in 1877 a case was discovered in the Cathedral of St. Domingo bearing the name of Christopher Columbus, and the bones found within it are regarded by many as the genuine remains of the Discoverer of the New World.

AIMS AND MISSION OF COLUMBUS.

"Certainly Columbus had united the study of nature to the study of religion, and he had conformed his mind to the precepts intimately drawn from the Catholic faith. It is thus that, having

learned by astronomy and ancient documents that beyond the limits of the known world there were, in addition, toward the West, large tracts of territory unexplored up to that time by anybody, he considered in his mind the immense multitude of those who were plunged in lamentable darkness, subject to insensate rites and to the superstitions of senseless divinities.

"He considered that they miserably led a savage life with ferocious customs, that more miserably still they were wanting in all notion of the most important things, and that they were plunged in ignorance of the only true God. Thus, in considering this in himself, he aimed first of all to propagate the name of Christian and the benefits of Christian charity in the West. As a fact, as soon as he presented himself to the sovereigns of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, he explained the cause for which they were not to fear taking a warm interest in the enterprise, as their glory would increase to the power of becoming immortal if they decided to carry the name and the doctrine of Jesus Christ into such distant regions. And when not long afterward his prayers were granted he called to witness that he wished to obtain from God that these sovereigns, sustained by His help and His mercy, should persevere in causing the Gospel to penetrate upon new shores and in new lands. He conceived in the same manner the plan of asking Alexander VI. for apostolic men, by a letter in which these words are found: "I hope that it will some day be given to me, with the help of God, to propagate afar the very holy name of Jesus Christ and His Gospel."

Also can one imagine him filled with joy when he wrote to Raphael Sanchez, the first who from the Indies had returned to Lisbon, that "immortal actions of grace must be rendered to God, in

that He had deigned to cause to prosper the enterprise so well; and that Jesus Christ could rejoice and triumph upon earth and in heaven for the coming salvation of innumerable people who previously had been going to their ruin." That if Columbus also asks of Ferdinand and Isabella to permit only Catholic Christians to go to the New World, there to accelerate trade with the natives, he supports this motive by the fact that "by his enterprise and efforts he has not sought for anything else than the glory and the development of the Christian religion."

This was what was perfectly known to Isabella, who, better than any other person, had penetrated the mind of such a great man; much more, it appears that the same plan was fully adopted by this very pious woman of great heart and manly mind. She bore witness in effect of Columbus that in courageously giving himself up to the vast ocean he "realized for the divine glory a most signal enterprise." And to Columbus himself, when he had happily returned, she wrote that she "esteemed as having highly employed the resources which she had consecrated and which she would still consecrate to the expeditions in the Indies, in view of the fact that the propagation of Catholicism would result from them."

It was inevitable that a man overwhelmed with a burden of trials so great and so intense would have succumbed had he not sustained himself by the consciousness of fulfilling a very noble enterprise, which he conjectured would be glorious for the Christian name and salutary for an infinite multitude.

And the enterprise so carried out is admirably illustrated by the events of that time. In effect, Columbus discovered America at about the period when a great tempest was going to unchain itself

against the Church. Inasmuch as that it is permitted by the course of events to appreciate the ways of Divine Providence, it really seems that the man for whom Liguria honors herself was destined by a special plan of God to compensate Catholicism for the injury which it was going to suffer in Europe.

As to Columbus, certain as he was of tracing out and of preparing the way for the Gospel, and fully absorbed in this thought, he caused all his actions to converge to it, not undertaking anything of any kind but under the shield of religion and with the escort of piety. We recall in this, in reality, things which are well known but which are none the less remarkable, in order to show forth the mind and the heart of this great man.

After seven years had revolved, when at last he goes to dare the ocean, he takes care that the expedition shall comply with the acts of spiritual expiation ; he prays to the Queen of Heaven to assist the enterprise and to direct its course, and before giving the order to make sail he invokes the august divine trinity.

Then, once fairly at sea, while the waters agitate themselves, while the crew murmurs, he maintains, under God's care, a calm constancy of mind. His plan manifests itself in the very names which he imposes on the new islands, and each time that he is called upon to land upon one of them he worships the Almighty God, and only takes possession of it in the name of Jesus Christ.

The Catholic University of America.

BY RIGHT REV. MGR. THOMAS J. CONATY, D. D., RECTOR.

"The university is Catholic and hence knows no nationality but that which intelligent faith engenders. The university is for the Church in America, and hence is American in the very best sense of Americanism, having as the circle of its benefiting our American Catholic people that it may ever stand as a Catholic and American institution, teaching to all men the blessings alike of our holy faith and of our political rights and privileges as a citizens of the republic, which is to us the home of our liberties and the goal of our political aspirations. It is Catholic and American that thus our Church and our country may be blessed by its work and enjoy the fruits of its ripe scholarship under the enlightened guidance of that Church to which Christ has promised the ever-abiding presence of the spirit of truth.

The Catholic Church has stood and stands for Christian education —the education which brings Christ into the schoolroom as well as into the church, and makes Him a model of all character. This thought possessed the Church from the beginning, and fought Grecian art and Roman philosophy. It Christianized art and philosophy in order to teach both its duty to the children of God. In this day of intellectual and materialistic ideas she preaches the same doctrine. Running through her entire system of schools, the very foundation-stone of her theory of instruction, the very soul of her education, is this thought of the Christian to be developed in the man. In this age she stands in the presence of intellectualism, saying to intellect that God is truth and Christ is the teacher of truth, and that nothing but the truth of Christ can fully satisfy the human intellect. She stands in the presence of the morality of to-day to tell it that there is no true morality which can make character, save man and society, except the morality which Christ taught, now found in the gospel principles. In the presence of the age she stands for scholarship, no

matter how the age may sneer and scoff at her pretensions. But she stands for Christian and not agnostic scholarship.

The Catholic Church in the educational movement of to-day speaks not only in the schoolroom, but also in art, in architecture and in music. For, after all, education is not merely in the master's word from his desk to the pupils seated in the forms before him. Education is in everything that tends to develop the human mind, to ennoble the human heart, to educate, to instruct and perfect man.

"This university takes its place and is alone in the position as the complement and crown of Christian education in our country. Aiming at the revival of the glory of the golden age of education, it is destined in the Providence of God to equal and surpass the best that is chronicled. That our country, with its boasted advance in general education, should have a Catholic university where all undergraduate studies should be set aside is no little credit to the ambition of our episcopate for the higher education in the true sense of the word. * * * It completes and crowns the work of our best universities. Alone it stands upon the mountain top in the capital of the nation, beckoning to all votaries of higher knowledges to come to its halls for the highest culture in all branches of intellectual endeavor, under the inspiration of the great mother Church, to whom was given by the Saviour the commission to teach the world all truth for all time.

"She seeks for the complete education of her laymen, that in the professions, in literature, in business, they may be leaders and not followers, yet leaders strengthened and fortified by the knowledge of higher science, acquired in an atmosphere of faith and true religion. Hence in this land, where instruction is the privilege of the many, where colleges and universities crowd one another, the Catholic Church has made the supreme effort of building a university above and beyond them all, where the latest and deepest researches of science and the fullest development of Christian ethics are placed within the reach of the leaders of thought, in science and religion, proving to the world that between religion and science, properly understood, there can be no antagonisms.—*From Dr. Conaty's Inaugural Address as Rector.*"

Prayer of St. Francis Xavier

FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE HEATHEN

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ETERNAL God, Creator of all things, remember that thou alone didst create the souls of infidels, framing them to Thy own image and likeness; behold, O Lord! how, to Thy dishonor, hell is daily replenished with them. Remember, O Lord! Thy only Son, Jesus Christ, who suffered for them, most bountifully shedding His precious blood; suffer not, O Lord! Thy Son and Our Lord to be any longer despised by infidels; but rather, being appeased by the entreaties and prayers of the elect, the saints, and of the Church, the most blessed spouse of Thy Son, vouchsafe to be mindful of Thy mercy, and, forgetting their idolatry and infidelity, cause them to know Him whom Thou didst send, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, who is our health, life, and resurrection, through whom we are made free and saved, to whom be all glory forever. Amen.

His Holiness, Pope Pius IX., by an autograph rescript, May 24th, 1847, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this prayer:

AN INDULGENCE OF THREE HUNDRED DAYS, once a day.—*Raccolta, p. 412.*

AT THE CRUCIFIXION

A FEW moments, and the great sacrifice will be consummated, love will be satisfied, and the ransom of the human race will be paid to divine justice. Let us go to Calvary, and for the last time look upon the bleeding, dying Face, listen to His last words, and receive His last sigh.

The Last Words

Seven times Jesus spoke from the cross. Let us meditate on these utterances, with contrition, gratitude, praise, and love.

"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom," said the good thief; and Jesus turned toward him with a look that touched the heart of the lost sheep. "Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with Me, in Paradise." Looking down at His Mother and the beloved disciple, He spoke the words, "Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy Mother." And from that moment John received Mary as his mother, and Mary regarded him as her son.

The end is approaching, and nature begins to mourn with the friends of Jesus. Darkness covered the whole earth. The sun was darkened. The end was near, yet His thirst for souls was not assuaged. "*Sitio!*"—"I thirst!" He cried. For three hours a mysterious darkness prevailed, when a loud cry rent the air: "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" They gave Him to drink, and when His lips were saturated with bitterness, and nothing was wanting to fill up the measure of His agony, He cried: "It is consummated." And at these words the veil of the temple was rent, the rock of Calvary opened, the earth trembled, and the dead arose from their graves.

"Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit!" And He died. The adorable lips are closed, the eyelids droop, the head falls on His breast. The great work of man's redemption is consummated. . . .

"And saying these words, He gave up the ghost."—*St. Francis de Sales.*

Prayer to Jesus Crucified

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech Thee to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; the while I contemplate with great love and tender pity Thy five wounds, pondering over them within me while I call to mind the words which David Thy prophet said of Thee, my Jesus: "They pierced my hands and my feet; they numbered all my bones."—*Psalm xxi. 17, 18.*

THE SCENE AT THE HOUR OF CRUCIFIXION.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

GLORIOUS LESSONS FROM THE LIGHT OF THE CROSS.

Precious Words from Thomas à Kempis.

INTRODUCTION.

Thomas à Kempis was born in 1380, at Kemp, a village situated at a small distance from Cologne. His surname was *Hammerlin*, or *Little Hammer*, translated into the word *Malleolus*, by his Latin biographers. His parents were of low condition; they were highly respected for their piety.

When he attained his sixth year, he was placed in one of the houses belonging to the Society of *Brothers and Sisters of Common Life.* It is remarkable that, in one of the schools of this society, *Erasmus* received his first rudiments of learning.

The school in which Thomas à Kempis entered himself, was in the town of Daventer, in West Friesland: where *Florentius*, the immediate successor of *Gerard de Groote*, the founder of the society, was vicar of the principal church.

When he attained his nineteenth year, Thomas à Kempis determined to enter the order of Saint Augustine. Tradition deduces that order from the celebrated doctor of the church of that name. Till the eleventh century, the monks of Saint Augustine seem to have been little more than a voluntary association of ecclesiastics; about that time they were fixed in a permanent order. They exercised a variety of ecclesiastical functions, and their public schools for instruction of youth were particularly esteemed. Florentius encouraged the Saint in his resolution to enter among them. He continued a novice during five years.

From the time of his profession, till his decease, a period of sixty-six years, Thomas à Kempis remained in the monastery of Zwoll, and in the continual practice of every virtue of his state.

He was successively promoted to the office of Bursar, Master of Novices, and Subprior.

He died on the 25th of July, in the year 1471, in the ninetieth year of his age. He is described to have been of small stature, well proportioned, and to have had a piercing eye. His body was discovered in 1672.

EXAMPLES OF THE HOLY FATHERS.

1. Look upon the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom shone real perfection and religion, and thou wilt see how little it is, yea, almost nothing, that we do.

Alas, what is our life, if it be compared with theirs!

Saints, and friends of Christ, they served our Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, labor and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayers and holy meditations, in frequent persecutions and reproaches.

2. Oh, how many and grievous tribulations did the Apostles suffer, and the Martyrs, and Confessors, and Virgins, and all the rest who resolved to follow the steps of Christ!

For they hated their lives in this world, that they might keep them unto life eternal.

Oh, what a strict and self-renouncing life the holy Fathers of the desert led! what long and grievous temptations did they bear! how often were they harassed by the enemy! what frequent and fervent prayer offered they up to God! what rigorous abstinence did they practise! what great zeal and fervor had they for spiritual progress! what a valiant contest had they to subdue their imperfections! how pure and upright an intention kept they towards God!

By day they labored, and in the night they gave themselves to long prayers; though even while they labored, they ceased but little from mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time profitably: every hour seemed short which they spent with God; and even their necessary bodily refection was forgotten in the great sweetness of contemplation.

They persevered in true humility, they lived in simple obedi-

ence, they walked in charity and patience; and so every day they advanced in spirit, and gained great favor with God.

They were given for an example to all religious; and ought more to excite us to advance in good, than the number of the lukewarm induce us to grow remiss.

5. Oh, how great was the fervor of all religious in the beginning of their holy institute!

Oh, how great was their devotion in prayer! how great their zeal for virtue! how vigorous the discipline that was kept up! what reverence and obedience, under the rule of the superior, flourished in all!

Their traces that remain still bear witness, that they were truly holy and perfect men who did battle so stoutly, and trampled the world under their feet.

Now he is thought great who is not a trangressor; and who can with patience endure what he hath undertaken.

6. Ah, the lukewarmness and negligence of our state! that we so soon fall away from our first fervor, and are even now tired of life through slothfulness and tepidity.

Would to God that advancement in virtue were not quite asleep in thee, who hast so often seen the manifold examples of the devout!

"HE THAT FOLLOWETH ME, WALKLTH NOT IN DARKNESS."

1. These are the words of Christ, whereby we are admonished how we must imitate His life and conversation, if we would be truly enlightened and delivered from all blindness of heart.

Let it, then, be our chief study to meditate on the life of Jesus Christ.

2. The teaching of Christ surpasseth all the teachings of the Saints; and he that hath His Spirit, will find therein a hidden manna.

But it happeneth that many, from the frequent hearing of the Gospel, feel little emotion; because they have not the spirit of Christ.

But he that would fully and with relish understand the words of Christ, must study to conform his whole life to Him.

3. What doth it profit thee to dispute deeply about the Trinity, if thou be wanting in humility, and so be displeasing to the Trinity?

In truth, sublime words make not man holy and just; but it is a virtuous life that maketh him dear to God.

I would rather feel compunction, than know how to define it.

If thou didst know the whole Bible outwardly, and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would it profit thee without the love of God and His grace?

"Vanity of vanities and all is vanity," but to love God and serve Him alone.

This is the highest wisdom; by despising the world, to make progress towards the kingdom of heaven.

4. It is vanity, therefore, to seek perishing riches, and to trust in them.

Vanity, also, it is, to court honors, and to lift up oneself on high.

Vanity is it to follow the desires of the flesh; and to desire that, for which hereafter there must be a heavy penalty.

Vanity is it to wish a long life, and take but little pains about a good life.

Vanity is it to attend only to the present life, and not to look forward to the things that are to come.

It is vanity to love what is passing away with all speed, and not to be hasting thither where endless joy abideth.

5. Oftentimes call to mind the proverb: "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing."

Study therefore to wean thy heart from love of visible things, and to betake thee to the things unseen; for they that follow the pleasure of their senses, sully conscience and lose the grace of God.

OF THE DOCTRINE OF TRUTH.

Happy is he whom truth teacheth by itself, not by figures and passing words, but as it is in itself.

Our own way of thinking and our sense often deceive us, and see but little.

What profiteth it to make a great dispute about hidden and

obscure things which we shall not be reproved in the Judgment for having been ignorant of?

Wonderful folly! that, neglecting the things that are useful and necessary, we willingly give our attention to such as are curious and mischievous! Having eyes, we see not.

2. And what does it concern us about questions of philosophy? He to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is delivered from a multitude of opinions.

From the One Word are all things, and all things speak this One; and this is the Beginning which also speaketh to us.

Without Him no man understandeth or judgeth rightly.

He to whom all things are one, who referreth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may be steadfast in heart, and abide in God at peace.

O Truth! my God! make me one with Thee in everlasting charity.

I am oftentimes wearied with reading and hearing many things; in Thee is all I wish or long for.

Let all teachers hold their peace, and all created things keep silence in Thy presence; do Thou alone speak to me.

3. The more a man is united within himself, and interiorly simple, so much the more and deeper things doth he understand without labor; for he receiveth the light of understanding from on high.

A pure, simple, and steadfast spirit is not distracted by the multitude of things he hath to do; for he doeth all for the honor of God, and striveth within himself to be free from all self-seeking.

Who doth more hinder thee, and trouble thee, than thine own heart's unmortified affection?

A good and devout man first arrangeth interiorly the works he hath to do exteriorly; nor do they lead him to the desires of an evil inclination, but he bendeth them to the judgment of right reason.

Who hath a stronger conflict than he that striveth to overcome himself?

And this ought to be our business; namely, to overcome self; and every day to get more the mastery over self; and to grow better and better.

4. All perfection in this life is attended by some imperfection, and all our far-seeing is not without a certain obscurity.

The humble knowledge of oneself is a surer way to God than deep researches after science.

Science is not to be blamed, nor the simple knowledge of anything good in itself and ordained by God; but a good conscience and a virtuous life are always to be preferred.

But because many take more pains to know much than to live well, therefore they often go astray, and bear no fruit at all, or but little.

5. Oh, if men would be as diligent in the rooting out of vices and grafting in of virtues as they are in mooting questions, there would not be so many evils and scandals among the people, nor such laxity in monasteries.

Truly, when the day of judgment cometh, it will not be asked of us, what we have read, but what we have done; not what fine discourses we have made, but how religiously we have lived.

Tell me;—where now are all those doctors and masters with whom thou wast well acquainted while they were yet alive, and in the glory of their learning?

Others now hold their preferments, and I know not whether they ever think of them.

In their lifetime they seemed to be something, and now they are not spoken of.

6. Oh, how quickly passeth away the glory of the world! Oh, that their life had been in keeping with their learning! Then would they have studied and read to good purpose.

How many perish in the world by vain learning; who take little care about the service of God.

And because they love rather to be great than humble, therefore they are lost in their own imaginings.

He is truly great who hath great charity.

He is truly great who is little in his own eyes, and counteth for nothing all the heights of honor.

He is truly prudent who esteemeth all earthly things as dung, that he may win Christ.

And he is truly most learned, who doth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

ON READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

TRUTH is to be sought for in the holy Scriptures, not eloquence.

All holy Scripture should be read in the spirit in which it was written.

We should seek profit in the Scriptures rather than subtlety of speech.

We ought to read devout and simple books as willingly as those that are high and profound.

Let not the authority of the author offend thee, whether he be of little or great learning; but let love of simple truth lead thee to read.

Inquire not who may have said a thing, but consider what is said.

2. Men pass away, but the "truth of the Lord abideth forever."

God speaketh to us in divers ways, without respect of persons.

Our curiosity is often a hindrance to us in reading the Scriptures, when we wish to understand and to discuss what ought to be passed over in simplicity.

If thou wilt derive profit, read with humility, with simplicity, and with faith; and seek not at any time the fame of being learned.

Be fond of inquiring, and listen in silence to the words of the Saints; and let not the parables of the ancients be displeasing to thee, for they are not uttered without a cause.

OF AVOIDING VAIN HOPE AND ARROGANCE.

HE is a vain man that putteth his hope in man, or in things created.

Be not ashamed to wait on others for the love of Jesus Christ, and to be looked upon as poor in this world.

Depend not upon thyself, but place thy hope in God.

Do what thou canst, and God will be with thy good will.

Trust not in thine own knowledge, nor in the cunning of any man living, but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth them that presume upon themselves.

2. Glory not in riches, if thou hast them, nor in friends, because they are powerful; but in God, who giveth all things, and desireth to give Himself above all things.

Boast not thyself of thy stature or beauty of body, which with a little sickness is spoiled and disfigured.

Be not proud of thy abilities or thy talents, lest thou offend God, to whom appertaineth whatever good thou mayest naturally have.

Esteem not thyself better than others, lest perhaps thou be accounted worse in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man.

Be not proud of thy own good works; for the judgments of God are other than those of men; and what pleaseth men oftentimes displeaseth Him.

If thou hast any good in thee, believe still better things of others, that thou mayest preserve humility.

It will do thee no harm to put thyself below everybody, but it will hurt thee very much to put thyself before any one.

Continual peace dwelleth with the humble; but in the heart of the proud is frequent envy and indignation.

OF OBEDIENCE AND SUBJECTION.

It is a very great thing to be in a state of obedience, to live under a superior, and not to be one's own master.

It is much safer to be in subjection than in authority.

Many are under obedience rather out of necessity than charity; and such as those suffer, and are apt to murmur.

Neither will they acquire liberty of mind, unless they submit themselves with their whole heart for God's sake.

Run hither or thither, thou wilt find no rest but in humble subjection under the government of a superior.

A fancy for places and change hath deluded many.

2. It is true, every one is desirous of acting according to his own liking, and is most inclined to such as are of his own mind.

But if God is amongst us, we must needs sometimes give up our own opinion for the blessing of peace.

Who is so wise, as to be able fully to know all things?

Be not over-confident therefore in thine own sentiments, but be ready also with pleasure to hear those of others.

Although thine opinion be right, yet if for God's sake thou leavest it and followest another man's, thou wilt profit the more by it.

3. For I have often heard that it is safer to listen and to take advice than to give it.

It may also happen that each one's opinion may be good; but to be unwilling to acquiesce in other men's, when reason or occasion requires it, is a sign of pride and obstinacy.

OF AVOIDING SUPERFLUITY OF WORDS.

FLY the tumult of men as much as thou canst; for the treating of worldly affairs is a great hindrance, even though they be discoursed of with a simple intention. For we are too easily contaminated and ensnared with vanity.

I would that many a time I had kept silence, and not been in company.

Why are we so fond of speaking and of talking idly together, when yet we seldom return to silence without some wound of conscience?

The reason why we are so fond of talking is, that we seek consolation from one another by much discoursing together; and we wish to lighten our heart, wearied with various thoughts.

And we are very fond of speaking and thinking of those things we very much love or wish for, or that we feel are a contradiction to us.

2. But, alas, it is often vainly and to no purpose; for this outward consolation is no small hindrance to interior and divine consolation.

Therefore we must watch and pray, lest the time pass away without fruit.

If it be lawful and expedient to speak, speak those things that edify.

Evil custom and negligence about our spiritual advancement, contribute much to the unguardedness of our tongue.

But devout conferences upon spiritual things are no small help to spiritual progress; especially where persons of congenial mind and spirit are associated together in God.

OF ACQUIRING PEACE AND ZEAL FOR OUR SPIRITUAL PROGRESS.

We might have much peace, if we would not busy ourselves with the sayings and doings of other people, and with things which concern us not.

How can he long abide in peace who entangleth himself with other people's concerns; who seeketh occasions abroad; who little or seldom recollecteth himself interiorly?

Blessed are the single-hearted, for they shall enjoy much peace.

2. What is the reason why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative?

Because their whole study was to mortify themselves wholly from all earthly desires; and so they were able to cleave to God with all their immost heart, and freely to attend to themselves.

But we are too much taken up with our own passions, and too solicitous about transitory things.

Seldom do we perfectly overcome one single vice; nor do we ardently desire to make daily progress; therefore we remain cold and tepid.

3. If we were perfectly dead to ourselves, and no ways entangled in earthly pursuits, then might we taste the savor of divine things, and experience something of heavenly contemplation.

The whole hindrance, and a very great one, is, that we are not free from passions and lusts, and strive not to walk in the perfect way of the Saints.

When we are met by even a little adversity, we are too soon cast down, and seek after human consolation.

4. If we strove like valiant men to stand in the battle, verily we should have the help of God upon us from heaven.

For He is ready to help them that fight, trusting in His grace; and He Himself provideth us occasions to fight, in order that we may overcome.

If we place our religious progress in outward observances only, our devotion will soon come to an end.

But let us lay the axe to the root, that, being purged of passions, we may possess our minds in peace.

5. If every year we rooted out one vice, we should soon become perfect men.

But now we often feel, on the contrary, that we have been better and more pure in the beginning of our conversion, than after many years of our profession.

Our fervor and progress ought to increase daily; but now it is esteemed a great thing if any one can retain something of his first fervor.

If we would do ourselves a little violence in the beginning, afterwards we should be able to do all things with ease and joy.

6. It is hard to give up what we are accustomed to, but harder to go contrary to our own will.

But if thou overcome not little and easy things, how wilt thou surmount greater difficulties.

Resist thine inclination in the beginning, and break off evil habits; lest, by little and little, the difficulty increase upon thee.

Oh, if thou didst consider what peace thou wouldst procure for thyself, and what joy for others, by well-doing, I think thou wouldst be more solicitous for thy spiritual progress.

OF RESISTING TEMPTATIONS.

As long as we live in this world, we cannot be without tribulation and temptation.

Hence it is written in Job, "Man's life on earth is a temptation."

Everyone, therefore, should be solicitous about his temptations, and watch in prayer, lest the devil find opportunity to catch him; who never sleepeth, but "goeth about, seeking whom he may devour."

No one is so perfect and holy, as not sometimes to have temptations; and we never can be wholly free from them.

2. Nevertheless, temptations are often very profitable to a man, troublesome and grievous though they be; for in them a man is humbled, purified, and instructed.

All the Saints passed through many tribulations and temptations, and profited by them.

And they that could not support temptations, became reprobate, and fell away.

There is no order so holy, nor place so retired, where there are not temptations or adversities.

3. A man is never wholly secure from temptation as long as he liveth; for since we were borne in concupiscence, there is within us the source of temptation.

When one temptation or tribulation is over, another cometh on, and we shall always have something to suffer; for we have lost the good of our original happiness.

Many seek to fly temptations, and fall the more grievously into them.

By flight alone we cannot overcome; but by patience and true humility we become stronger than all our enemies.

4. He who only shunneth them outwardly, and doth not pluck out their root, will profit little; nay, temptations will the sooner return, and he will find himself in a worse condition.

By degrees and by patience, with longanimity, thou wilt, by God's grace, better overcome them than by harshness and thine own importunity.

Take counsel the oftener in temptation, and do not deal harshly with one who is tempted; but pour in consolation, as thou wouldst wish to be done unto thyself.

5. Inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God, is the beginning of all evil temptations.

For as a ship without a helm is driven to and fro by the waves, so the man who is negligent, and giveth up his resolution, is tempted in many ways.

Fire trieth iron, and temptation a just man.

We often know not what we can do, but temptation discovereth what we are.

Still we must watch, especially in the beginning of temptation; for then the enemy is more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of the mind, but is withstood upon the threshold the very moment that he knocketh.

Whence a certain one hath said:

> "Resist beginnings; all too late the cure,
> When ills have gathered strength by long delay."

For first there cometh into the mind a simple thought; then a strong imagination; afterwards delight, and finally the evil motion and consent.

And so, by little and little, the malignant foe gaineth full entrance, when he is not resisted in the beginning.

And the longer any one hath been slothful in resisting, so much the weaker he daily becometh in himself, and the enemy so much the stronger against him.

6. Some suffer grievous temptations in the beginning of their conversion, others in the end, and some there are who in a manner are troubled all their lifetime.

Some are very lightly tempted, according to the wisdom and equity of the ordinance of God, who weigheth man's condition and merits, and pre-ordaineth all things for the salvation of His elect.

7. We must not, therefore, despair when we are tempted, but on that account pray the more fervently to God, that He would vouchsafe to help us in every tribulation; who of a truth, according to the saying of St. Paul, "will make such issue with the temptation, that we may be able to sustain it."

Let us, then, humble our souls under the hand of God in every temptation and tribulation; for the humble in spirit He will save and exalt.

8. In temptations and tribulations it is proved what progress a man hath made; and therein also there is greater merit, and virtue is made more manifest.

Nor is it much if a man be devout and fervent when he feels no trouble; but if in time of adversity he suffereth patiently, then will there be hopes of greater profit.

Some are preserved from great temptations, and are often overcome in daily little ones; that, thus humbled, they may never presume upon themselves in great trials, when they are weak in such trifling occurrences.

OF AVOIDING RASH JUDGMENT.

TURN thine eyes back upon thyself, and see that thou judge not the doings of others.

In judging others a man toileth in vain, often erreth, and

easily sinneth; but in judging and scrutinizing himself, he always laboreth with profit.

We often judge of a thing according as we have it at heart; for true judgment is easily lost through private affection.

If God were always the only object of our desire, we should not be so easily disturbed at our own opinions being resisted.

2. But oftentimes there is something lying hid within, or occurring from without, that draws us along with it.

Many secretly seek themselves in what they do, and are not aware of it.

They seem also to continue in good peace, so long as things are done according to their will and judgment; but if aught happen otherwise than they desire, they are soon disturbed, and become sad.

Too often difference of feelings and opinions giveth rise to dissensions between friends and neighbors, between religious and devout persons.

3. An inveterate habit is with difficulty relinquished, and no one is willingly led beyond his own views.

If thou reliest more on thine own reason or industry than on the subduing virtue of Jesus Christ, thou wilt seldom and with difficulty become an enlightened man.

For God willeth us to become perfectly subject to Himself, and by the love that burneth in us to transcend all reason.

OF WORKS DONE OUT OF CHARITY.

Evil ought not to be done for anything in the world, nor for the love of any human being; but yet for the benefit of one that is in need, a good work is sometimes freely to be left undone, or rather to be changed for what is better.

For by this means a good work is not lost, but changed into a better.

Without charity, the outward work profiteth nothing; but whatever is done out of charity, be it ever so little and contemptible, it all becometh fruitful; inasmuch as God regardeth out of how much love a man doth a work, rather than how much he doeth.

2. He doth much who loveth much.

He doth much who doth well what he doeth.

He doth well, who regardeth rather the common good than his own will.

Oftentimes that seemeth to be charity which is rather of the flesh; for natural inclination, self-will, hope of reward, study of our own interest, will seldom be absent.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity seeketh himself in nothing, but only desireth God to be glorified in all things.

And he envieth no man, for he loveth no joy for himself alone.

Neither doth he desire to rejoice in himself, but above all good things wisheth to find his blessedness in God.

He attributeth nothing of good to any man, but referreth it all to God, from whom, as from their fountain, all things proceed, and in whom as in their end, all the Saints repose in fruition.

Oh, if one had but a spark of real charity, truly would he feel that all earthly things are full of vanity.

OF BEARING THE DEFECTS OF OTHERS.

WHATEVER a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to bear with patience, until God ordain otherwise.

Reflect that perhaps it is better so for thy trial and patience without which our merits are little worth.

Nevertheless, it behoveth thee, under such hindrances, to pray, that God would vouchsafe to come and help thee, and that thou mayest be able to bear them in good part.

2. If any one once or twice admonished doth not comply, contend not with him; but leave it all to God, that His will may be done, and He be honored in all His servants, who knoweth how to turn evil into good.

Study to be patient in bearing the defects and infirmities of others, of what kind soever; for thou also hast many things, which others must bear with.

If thou canst not make thyself such as thou wouldst be, how canst thou expect to have another exactly to thy mind?

We would fain see others perfect, and yet our own faults we amend not.

3. We would have others strictly corrected, and we will not be corrected ourselves.

The large liberty others take displeaseth us, and yet we ourselves will not be denied any thing we ask for.

We wish others to be kept within the rules, and we ourselves will not bear to be checked ever so little.

And so it is clear how seldom we weigh our neighbor in the same balance with ourselves.

If all were perfect, what then should we have to bear with from others for the love of God?

4. But now God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one another's burdens; for no one is without defect, no one without his burden; no one is sufficient for himself, no one is wise enough for himself; but we must support one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish one another.

But the measure of each man's virtue is best seen in occasions of adversity.

For occasions do not make a man frail, but they show what he is.

OF THE THOUGHTS OF DEATH.

A VERY little while and all will be over with thee here. See to it, how it stands with thee in the next life. Man is to-day, and to-morrow he is seen no more.

And when he is taken away from the sight, he is quickly also out of mind.

Oh, the dullness and hardness of the human heart, that dwelleth only upon things present, instead rather of providing for those which are to come!

Thou shouldst so order thyself in every deed and thought as if thou wert immediately to die.

If thou hadst a good conscience, thou wouldst not much fear death.

It is better to avoid sin than to fly death.

If thou art not prepared to-day, how wilt thou be to-morrow?

To-morrow is an uncertain day; and how knowest thou if thou shalt have to-morrow?

Of what use is it to live long, when we advance so little.

2. Ah, long life doth not always amend us; nay oftentimes it doth rather augment our guilt.

Would that even for one day we had behaved ourselves well in this world!

Many count the years of their conversion, but oftentimes the fruit of amendment is but little.

If it is a fearful thing to die; it may be still more dangerous to live longer.

Blessed is the man that hath the hour of his death continually before his eyes, and daily putteth himself in order for death.

If thou hast at any time seen a person die, reflect that thou too must pass the same way.

3. When it is morning, think thou wilt not live till evening.

And when evening comes, venture not to promise thyself the next morning.

Be therefore always in readiness, and so live, that death may never find thee unprepared.

Many die suddenly and unprovidedly: for the Son of Man will come at an hour when He is not looked for.

When that last hour shall have come, then thou wilt begin to think far otherwise of all thy past life; and great will be thy grief, that thou hast been so negligent and remiss.

4. How happy and how prudent is he who now striveth to be in life what he would fain be found in death!

For it will give great confidence of dying happily, to have a perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to advance in virtue, a love of discipline, the spirit of penance, readiness of obedience, abnegation of self, and patience to bear any kind of adversity for the love of Christ.

Many are the good works thou canst do whilst in health; but when thou art sick, I know not what thou wilt be able to do.

Few are improved by sickness; so also they that go much abroad seldom grow in sanctity.

5. Trust not in thy friends and neighbors, and put not off thy soul's welfare till the future, for men will forget thee sooner than thou thinkest.

It is better to provide now in time, and send some good before thee, than to trust to the assistance of others after death.

If thou art not solicitous for thyself now, who will be solicitous for thee hereafter?

Now is the time very precious, behold "now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation."

But, O misery! that thou spendest not this time more profitably; wherein thou hast it in thy power to merit that thou mayest live eternally.

The time will come when thou wilt fain implore one day or even one hour for amendment; and I know not if thou wilt obtain it.

6. Oh, then, dearly beloved, from what great danger mayest thou free thyself; from what great fear be rescued, if only thou wouldst be always fearful, and looking for death!

Study, therefore, so to live now, that in the hour of death thou mayest be able rather to rejoice than to fear.

Learn how to despise all things, that then thou mayest begin to live with Christ.

Learn now to die to the world, that then thou mayest freely go to Christ.

Chastise thy body now by penance, that then thou mayest have an assured confidence.

7. Ah, fool! why thinkest thou to live long, when thou art not sure of one day?

How many thinking to live long have been deceived, and snatched unexpectedly from life!

How often hast thou heard related, that such a one fell by the sword, another is drowned, another falling from on high broke his neck, this man died at table, that other came to his end at play!

Some perish by fire, some by the sword, some by pestilence, some by the hands of robbers, and so death is the end of all; and man's life passeth away suddenly like a shadow.

8. Who will remember thee when thou art dead? and who will pray for thee?

Do now, beloved, do now, all thou canst; for thou knowest not when thou art to die, and, moreover, thou knowest not what will befall thee after death.

Whilst thou hast time, amass for thyself immortal riches.

Think of nothing but thy salvation; care only for the things of God.

Make to thyself friends now, by venerating the Saints of God, and imitating their actions, that when thou shalt fail in this life, they may receive thee into everlasting dwellings.

9. Keep thyself as a pilgrim and a stranger upon earth, that hath no concern with the business of the world.

Keep thy heart free and lifted up to God, for here thou hast no enduring city.

Send thither thy prayers and daily sighs, with tears, that thy spirit may merit after death to pass happily to our Lord Amen.

OF JUDGMENT, AND THE PUNISHMENTS OF SINNERS.

In all things look to the end, and how thou wilt stand before the strict Judge, from whom there is nothing hid; who takes no bribes, and receives no excuses, but will judge that which is just.

O most miserable and foolish sinner, what wilt thou answer unto God, who knoweth all thy evil deeds,—thou who art sometimes afraid of the countenance of an angry man?

Why dost thou not provide thee against the day of judgment, when no man can be excused or defended by another, but each one will have enough to do to answer for himself?

Now thy labor is profitable, thy tears are acceptable, thy groans are heard, thy sorrow is satisfying and purifieth the soul.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholesome purgatory; who, suffering wrongs, is more concerned at another's malice than at his own injury; who prays freely for his adversaries, forgiving their offences from his heart; who delays not to ask pardon of others; who is easier moved to pity than to anger; who does frequent violence to himself; and strives to bring his flesh wholly in subjection to the spirit.

Better is it to purge away our sins, and cut off our vices now, than to keep them for purgation hereafter.

Truly we deceive ourselves, through the inordinate love we bear the flesh.

3. What else will that fire devour but thy sins?

The more thou sparest thyself now, and followest the flesh,

so much the more dearly shalt thou pay for it hereafter, and the more fuel dost thou lay up for that fire.

In what things a man hath most sinned, in those things shall he be most grievously punished.

There the slothful will be pricked with burning goads, the gluttonous tormented with extreme hunger and thirst; there the luxurious and the lovers of pleasure will have burning pitch and fetid sulphur rained upon them; and the envious, like rabid dogs, will howl for grief.

4. There will be no vice but will have its own peculiar torment.

There the proud will be filled with all confusion, and the avaricious pinched with the most miserable want.

There one hour of punishment will be more grievous than a hundred years of the most bitter penance here.

There will be no rest, no consolation for the damned, whereas here we sometimes cease from labor and enjoy the consolation of our friends.

Be therefore now solicitous and sorrowful for thy sins, that in the day of judgment thou mayest be in security with the blessed: for then the just shall stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted and oppressed them.

Then will he stand up to judge who now humbly submitteth himself to the judgment of men.

Then shall the poor and humble have great confidence, and the proud will fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world, who for Christ's sake learned to be a fool and despised.

Then every tribulation borne with patience shall be pleasing, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

Then shall every devout person rejoice, and all the irreligious shall be sad.

Then shall the flesh that was afflicted exult more than if it had always fared in delights.

Then shall the mean habit shine, and the fine garment grow dingy.

Then shall the poor cottage be praised above the gilded palace.

Then shall enduring patience more avail than all the poor of the world.

Then shall simple obedience be more highly exalted than all worldly cunning.

6. Then a pure and good conscience shall bring more joy than learned philosophy.

Then shall the contempt of riches far outweigh all the treasures of the children of earth.

Then shalt thou find more consolation in having prayed devoutly, than in having feasted daintily.

Then shalt thou rejoice more in having kept silence, than for having made long discourses, or talked much.

Then shall holy works be of greater value than multitudes of goodly words.

Then shall strictness of life and hard penance please more than all the delights of earth.

Learn to suffer in little things now, that then thou mayest be delivered from more grievous sufferings.

Try first here what thou canst bear hereafter.

If now thou canst endure so little, how wilt thou be able to suffer eternal torments?

If now a little suffering makes thee so impatient, what will hell do then?

Behold, assuredly, both joys thou canst not have,—to delight thyself here in this world, and afterwards to reign with Christ.

7. If up to this very day thou hadst always lived in honors and pleasures, what would it all profit thee, did it happen that thou must immediately die?

All therefore is vanity, except to love God and serve Him only.

For he that loveth God with his whole heart, feareth neither death, nor punishment, nor judgment, nor hell; for perfect love giveth secure access to God.

But he who still finds delight in sin, no wonder if he fear death and judgment.

It is good, however, if love as yet reclaim thee not from evil, that at least the fear of hell do check thee.

For, indeed, he that setteth aside the fear of God will not be

able to persevere long in good, but will very soon fall into the snares of the devil.

OF THE FERVENT AMENDMENT OF OUR WHOLE LIFE.

1. Be watchful and diligent in the service of God, and often reflect: What hast thou come hither for, and why hast thou left the world? Was it not that thou mightest live for God, and become a spiritual man?

Be fervent, then, in making progress; for thou shalt shortly receive the reward of thy labors, and then neither fear nor sorsow shall come near thy borders.

Thou shalt labor a little now, and thou shalt find great rest, yea, everlasting joy.

If thou continue faithful and fervent in doing, God will doubtless be faithful and rich in rewarding.

Thou must keep a good and firm hope of coming to the crown; but thou must not be too secure, lest thou grow indolent, or be lifted up.

2. When a certain anxious person, who oftentimes wavered between hope and fear, once overcome with sadness, threw himself upon the ground in prayer before one of the altars in the church, and revolving these things in his mind, said, Oh, if I only knew that I should persevere: that very instant he heard within him this heavenly answer: And if thou didst know this, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst then do, and thou shalt be perfectly secure.

And immediately being consoled and comforted, he committed himself to the divine will, and his anxious wavering ceased.

He had no longer any wish for curious searchings to find out what should happen to him, but studied rather to learn what was the acceptable and perfect will of God for the beginning and the perfecting of every good work.

3. "Hope in the Lord," saith the prophet, "and do good, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed with the riches thereof."

There is one thing that keepeth many back from spiritual progress, and from fervor in amendment; namely, a dread of the difficulty or of the labor that is necessary in the struggle.

And assuredly they especially advance beyond others in vir-

tue, who strive the most manfully to overcome the very things which are the hardest and most contrary to them.

For there a man doth profit most and merit more abundant grace, where he doth most overcome himself and mortify his spirit.

4. All have not, indeed, equal difficulties to overcome and mortify; but a diligent and zealous person will make greater progress, though he have more passions, than another who is well-regulated, but less fervent in the pursuit of virtues.

Two things especially conduce to great improvement; namely, forcibly to withdraw oneself from what nature is viciously inclined to, and fervently to follow up the good one is most in need of.

Study, likewise, especially to guard against and to get the better of such things as oftenest displease thee in others.

5. Turn all occasions to thy spiritual profit, so that if thou seest or hearest any good examples, thou mayest be stirred up to imitate them.

And whatever thou shalt observe that is blameworthy, take care not to do the same thing thyself; or if thou hast ever done so, study to amend as soon as possible.

As thine eye observeth others, so again thou art also observed by others.

How pleasant and sweet it is to see brethren fervent and devout, well-mannered and well-disciplined!

How sad and afflicting to see them walking disorderly, and not practising the things that they are called to.

How mischievous it is to neglect the purpose of their vocation, and turn their minds to what is not their business!

6. Do thou be mindful of the purpose thou hast undertaken, and place before thee the image of the Crucified.

Well mayest thou be ashamed when looking into the life of Jesus Christ, that as yet thou hast not studied more to conform thyself to Him, long as thou hast been in the way of God.

The religious who exerciseth himself earnestly and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall find there abundantly all that is useful and necessary for him; nor need he seek out of Jesus for anything better.

Oh, if the crucified Jesus should come into our heart, how quickly and sufficiently learned should we be!

7. The fervent religious beareth and taketh all things well, that are commanded him.

The negligent and lukewarm religious hath trouble upon trouble, and endureth anguish on every side; for he has no consolation within, and is forbidden to seek it without.

The religious that liveth out of discipline is exposed to dreadful ruin.

He that is seeking to be more free and unrestrained will always be in trouble; for one thing or other will ever disgust him.

8. How do so many other religious do, who live most strictly under the cloistered discipline?

They seldom go abroad, they live retired, they are fed on the very poorest, they are coarsely clad, they labor much, they talk little, they keep late vigils, they rise early, they spend much time in prayer, they read frequently, and keep themselves in all discipline.

Consider the Carthusians, and the Cistercians, and the monks and nuns of other religious orders, how they rise every night to sing praises to the Lord! And what a shame it would be for thee to grow slothful at such a time, when so great a multitude of religious are beginning to sing aloud with joy to God!

9. Oh, if there were nothing else to do but praise the Lord our God with all our heart and voice! Oh, if thou didst never want to eat, or drink, or sleep, but couldst be always praising God, and occupied with spiritual pursuits only, then thou wouldst be much happier than now, since thou art a slave to the flesh from necessities of every kind.

Would to God that there were none of these necessities, but only spiritual reflections required for the soul. These, alas, it is seldom enough we taste!

10. When a man hath arrived so far, that he seeks his consolation from no created thing, then first doth he begin truly to taste what God is: then, too, will he be well content with everything that happens.

Then will he neither rejoice for much nor be sorrowful for

little, but will commit himself wholly and confidingly to God, who is to him all in all; to whom nothing is lost nor dieth, but for whom all things live, and at whose beck they instantly obey.

11. Ever keep in mind thine end, and that time lost returneth no more.

Without care and diligence thou shalt never acquire virtues.

If once thou beginnest to grow lukewarm, thou beginnest to be in a bad state.

But if thou give thyself to fervor, thou shalt find great peace; and thou shalt feel thy labor light, through the grace of God and for the love of virtue.

The fervent and diligent man is ready for all things.

It is harder labor to withstand our vices and passions than to toil at bodily labors.

He that shunneth not small defects, by little and little falleth into greater.

Thou wilt always rejoice in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably.

Watch over thyself, stir up thyself, admonish thyself, and whatever may become of others, neglect not thyself.

In proportion as thou dost violence to thyself, the greater progress wilt thou make.

OF THE ROYAL ROAD OF THE HOLY CROSS.

1. To many this seemeth a hard saying: "Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow Jesus."

But it will be much harder to hear that last word: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

For they who now love to hear and follow the word of the Cross shall not then fear the sentence of eternal condemnation.

This sign of the Cross shall be in heaven when the Lord shall come to judge.

Then all the servants of the Cross, who in their lifetime have conformed themselves to Him that was crucified, shall come to Christ their Judge with great confidence.

2. Why, then, art thou afraid to take up thy cross, which leadeth to the kingdom?

In the Cross is salvation; in the Cross is life; in the Cross is protection from enemies.

In the Cross is infusion of heavenly sweetness; in the Cross is strength of mind; in the Cross is joy of spirit.

In the Cross is height of virtue; in the Cross is perfection of sanctity.

There is no health of soul, nor hope of eternal life, but in the Cross.

Take up, therefore, thy cross, and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting.

He is gone before thee, carrying His cross, and He died for thee upon the cross, that thou mayest also bear thy cross, and love to die on the cross.

Because if thou die with Him, thou shalt also live with Him; and if thou art His companion in suffering, thou shalt also be His companion in glory.

3. Behold in the Cross all doth consist, and all lieth in our dying; and there is no other way to life and to true interior peace, but the way of the holy Cross and of dally mortification.

Go where thou wilt, seek what thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the holy Cross.

Dispose and order all things according as thou wilt, and as seemeth best to thee; and thou wilt still find something to suffer, either willingly or unwillingly; and so thou shalt always find the Cross.

For either thou shalt feel pain in the body, or sustain in thy soul tribulation of spirit.

4. Sometimes thou shalt be deserted by God; at other times thou shalt be afflicted by thy neighbor; and, what is more, thou shalt often be a trouble to thyself.

Neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; for as long as it shall please God, thou must bear it.

For God willeth that thou learn to suffer tribulation without comfort, and wholly submit thyself to Him, and become more humble by tribulation.

No man hath so heartfelt a sense of the Passion of Christ as he whose lot it hath been to suffer all things.

The Cross, therefore, is always ready, and everywhere awaiteth thee.

Thou canst not escape it, whithersoever thou runnest; for wheresoever thou goest, thou carriest thyself with thee, and shalt always find thyself.

Turn thyself upward, or turn thyself downward; turn thyself inward, or turn thyself outward; everywhere thou shalt find the Cross.

And everywhere thou must of necessity hold fast patience, if thou desirest inward peace, and wouldst merit an eternal crown

5. If thou carry the Cross willingly, it will carry thee and bring thee to thy desired end, namely, to that place where there will be an end of suffering, though here there will be no end.

If thou carry it unwillingly, thou makest it a burden to thee, and loadest thyself the more, and nevertheless thou must bear it.

If thou fling away one cross, without doubt thou wilt find another, and perhaps a heavier.

6. Dost thou think to escape that which no mortal ever could avoid? What saint ever was in the world without his cross and tribulation?

For even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was not for one hour of His life without the anguish of His Passion. "It behoved," said He, "that Christ should suffer and rise from the dead, and so enter into His glory."

And how dost thou seek another way than this royal way, which is the way of the holy Cross.

7. The whole life of Christ was a cross and a martyrdom; and dost thou seek for thyself rest and joy?

Thou errest, thou errest, if thou seekest aught else than to suffer tribulation; for this whole mortal life is full of miseries, and everywhere marked with crosses.

And the higher a person is advanced in spirit, the heavier crosses shall he often meet with; because the pain of his banishment increaseth in proportion to his love.

8. Yet such a one, thus many ways afflicted, is not without some relief of consolation; because he is sensible of the very great profit he reaps by bearing the Cross.

For whilst he willingly resigns himself to it, all the burden of tribulation is converted into an assured hope of comfort from God.

And the more the flesh is brought down by affliction, the more is the spirit strengthened by interior grace.

And sometimes he gaineth such strength through affection to tribulation and adversity, by his love of conformity to the Cross of Christ, as not to be willing to be without suffering and affliction; because such a one believeth himself to be so much the more acceptable to God, the more and more grievous things he shall be able to bear for His sake.

This is not man's power, but the grace of Christ; which doth and can effect such great things in frail flesh, that what it naturally abhors and flies, even this, through fervor of spirit, it now embraces and loves.

9. To bear the Cross; to love the Cross; to chastise the body and bring it under subjection; to fly honors, to love to suffer insults, to depise oneself, and to wish to be despised; to bear all adversities and losses, and to desire no prosperity in this world;—all this is not according to man's natural inclination.

If thou lookest unto thyself, thou canst do nothing of this sort of thyself.

But if thou confidest in the Lord, strength will be given to thee from heaven, and the world and the flesh shall be made subject to thee.

Neither shalt thou fear thine enemy the devil, if thou art armed with faith, and signed with the Cross of Christ.

10. Set thyself, then, like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to bear manfully the Cross of thy Lord, for the love of Him who was crucified for thee.

Prepare thyself to suffer many adversities and divers evils in this miserable life; for so it will be with thee, wherever thou art, and so indeed wilt thou find it, wheresoever thou hide thyself.

It must be so, and there is no remedy against tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them patiently.

Drink of the chalice of thy Lord lovingly, if thou desirest to be His friend, and to have part with Him.

Leave consolations to God, to do with them as best pleaseth Him.

But be ready on thy part to bear tribulations, and account them the greatest consolations; for the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, although thou alone couldst suffer them all.

11. When thou shalt arrive thus far, that tribulation shall be sweet to thee, and thou shalt relish it for the love of Christ, then think that it is well with thee, for thou hast found a paradise upon earth.

As long as suffering is grievous to thee, and thou seekest to fly from it, so long shall it be ill with thee; and the [desire of] flying from tribulation shall pursue thee everywhere.

12. If thou set thyself to what thou oughtest, that is, to suffer and to die, it will quickly be better with thee and thou shalt find peace.

Although thou shouldst have been rapt to the third heaven with St. Paul, thou art not thereby secured that thou shalt suffer no adversity: "I," said Jesus, "will show him how great things he must suffer for My name."

To suffer, therefore, is what awaits thee, if thou art resolved to love Jesus, and constantly to serve Him.

13. Would to God thou wert worthy to suffer something for the name of Jesus! how great glory would remain unto thyself, how great joy would it be to all the saints of God, and how great edification to thy neighbor!

All recommend patience, but, alas, how few are there that desire to suffer.

With good reason oughtest thou willingly to suffer a little for Christ, since many suffer greater things for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou must lead a dying life; and the more a man dieth to himself, the more doth he begin to live unto God.

No man is fit to comprehend heavenly things who hath not resigned himself to suffer adversities for Christ.

Nothing is more acceptable to God, nothing more salutary for thee in this world, than to suffer willingly for Christ.

And if thou couldst make choice, thou oughtest to prefer to suffer adversities for Christ; than to be delighted with much

consolation; because thou wouldst more resemble Christ, and be more likened to all the Saints.

For our merit, and the advancement of our state, consists not in having many sweetnesses and consolations; but rather in bearing great afflictions and tribulations.

If, indeed, there had been anything better, and more beneficial to man's salvation, than suffering, Christ certainly would have showed it by word and example.

For He manifestly exhorts both His disciples that followed Him, and all that desire to follow Him, to bear the Cross, saying, "If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

So that when we have read and searched all, let this be the final conclusion, that "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God."

OF THE OBEDIENCE OF AN HUMBLE SUBJECT, AFTER THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST.

Son, he who striveth to withdraw himself from obedience withdraweth himself from grace; and he that seeketh particular privileges loseth such as are in common.

He who doth not freely and willingly submit himself to his Superior, it is a sign that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient to him, but oftentimes rebelleth and murmureth.

Learn, then, to submit thyself readily to thy Superior, if thou desire to subdue thy own flesh.

For sooner is the exterior enemy overcome, if the inward man be not laid waste.

There is not a more troublesome or worst enemy to the soul than thou thyself art when not well agreeing with the spirit.

Thou must in good earnest conceive a true contempt of thyself, if thou wilt prevail against flesh and blood.

Because thou lovest thyself as yet too inordinately, therefore dost thou fear to resign thyself wholly to the will of others.

2. But what great matter is it, if thou, who art but dust and a mere nothing, submit thyself to man for God's sake, when I, the Almighty and the Most High, who created all things out of nothing, have for thy sake humbly subjected Myself to man?

I became the most humble and most abject of all men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride by My humility.

Learn, O dust, to obey; earth and clay that thou art, learn to humble thyself, and to bow down under the feet of all.

Learn to break thy own will, and to yield thyself up to all subjection.

3. Kindle wrath against thyself, suffer not the swelling of pride to live in thee; but show thyself so submissive and little that all may trample on thee, and tread thee under their feet as the dirt of the streets.

What hast thou, vain man, to complain of?

What answer, wretched sinner, canst thou make to those that reproach thee, thou who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved hell?

But Mine eye hath spared thee, because thy soul was precious in My sight; that thou mightest know My love, and mightest always live thankful for My favors; and that thou mightest continually give thyself to true subjection and humility, and bear patiently thy own contempt.

THAT THERE IS NO BEING SECURE FROM TEMPTATION IN THIS LIFE.

SON, thou art never secure in this life; but as long as thou livest spiritual weapons are always necessary for thee.

Thou art in the midst of enemies, and art assaulted on the right hand and on the left.

If, therefore, thou dost not make use of the buckler of patience on every occasion, thou wilt not be long without a wound.

Moreover, if thou dost not set thy heart fixedly on Me, with a sincere will of suffering all things for My sake, thou canst neither sustain the heat of this warfare, nor attain to the palm of the blessed.

It behooveth thee, therefore, to go through all manfully, and to use a strong hand against whatsoever withstandeth thee.

For to him that overcometh is given manna, but to the sluggard is left much misery.

2. If in this life thou seekest rest, how then wilt thou come to the eternal rest?

Set not thyself for much rest, but for great patience.

Seek true peace not upon earth, but in heaven; not in men nor in other creatures, but in God alone.

Thou must be willing, for the love of God, to suffer all things; labors and sorrows, temptations, vexations, anxieties, necessities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reproofs, humiliations, confusions, contempts.

These help to virtue, these prove the novice of Christ, these things weave a celestial crown.

I will give thee back for this short labor a reward eternal, and for transitory confusion glory that is infinite.

3. Dost thou think always to have spiritual consolations when thou pleasest?

My Saints had not so; but they met with many troubles, and various temptations, and great desolations.

But they bore all with patience, and confided more in God than in themselves; knowing that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to merit the glory that is to come.

Wouldst thou have that immediately, which others, after many tears and great labors, have hardly obtained?

Wait upon the Lord, do manfully, and be of good heart; do not despond, do not fall off, but offer with constancy both soul and body for the glory of God.

I will reward thee most abundantly; I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

OF THE GOOD GOVERNMENT OF OURSELVES IN OUTWARD THINGS, AND OF HAVING RECOURSE TO GOD IN DANGERS.

Son, thou oughtest dilligently to aim at this, that in every place, and in every action or external occupation, thou be inwardly free, and master of thyself; and that all things be under thee, and not thou under them.

That thou mayest be lord and ruler of thy actions, and not a slave or mercenary.

But rather a freeman and a true Israelite, transferred to the lot and to the liberty of the sons of God.

Who stand above things present, and contemplate the eternal; who with the left eye regard things passing, and with the right those of heaven:

Whom things temporal draw not away to adhere to them; but they rather draw these things to subserve aright the end for which they were ordained by God, and appointed by that Sovereign Artist, who has left nothing disordered in his whole creation.

2. If, likewise, in all events, thou depend not upon things as they appear outwardly, nor regard with a carnal eye things seen and heard, but if, on every occasion, thou enter, like Moses, into the tabernacle to consult the Lord, thou shalt sometimes hear the divine answer, and shalt return instructed about many things present and future.

For Moses always had recourse to the tabernacle for the deciding doubts and questions, and fled to the aid of prayer for succor against the dangers and wickedness of men.

So must thou, in like manner, fly to the closet of thy heart, and there most earnestly implore the Divine assistance.

For therefore, as thou readest, were Josue and the children of Israel deceived by the Gabaonites, because they did not first consult the Lord; but too easily giving credit to pleasant words, were deluded with counterfeit piety.

OF THE DAY OF ETERNITY AND OF THE DISTRESSES OF THIS LIFE.

Oh, most happy mansion of the celestial city! Oh, most bright day of eternity! which no night ever obscureth, but which the Sovereign Truth always enlighteneth.

A day always joyful, always secure, and never changing its state for the contrary.

Oh, that this day would shine forth, and that all these temporal things would come to an end!

It shineth, indeed, upon the Saints, resplendent with everlasting brightness; but to us pilgrims upon earth it is seen only afar off and as through a glass.

2. The citizens of heaven know how joyful that day is; but we poor exiled children of Eve, mourn that this our day is bitter and tedious.

The days of this life are short and evil, full of griefs and distresses; where man is defiled with many sins, ensnared with many passions, enslaved with many fears, harassed with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, entangled with many vanities, encompassed with many errors, worn out with many labors, troubled with temptation, enervated with pleasures, tormented with want.

3. Oh, when will there be an end to these evils?

When shall I be set at liberty from the wretched slavery of vice? When, O Lord, shall I think of Thee alone? When shall I fully rejoice in Thee?

When shall I be without any impediment to true liberty, without any grievance of mind and body?

When shall there be solid peace, peace firm and undisturbed, peace within and without, peace secure on every side?

O good Jesus! when shall I stand to behold Thee? When shall I contemplate the glory of Thy kingdom? When wilt thou be all in all to me?

Oh, when shall I be with Thee in Thy kingdom, which Thou hast prepared for Thy beloved from all eternity?

I am left poor and an exile in an enemy's country, where there are daily wars and grievous misfortunes.

4. Solace my banishment, assuage my sorrow, for my every desire aspireth unto Thee; for whatever this world offereth for my comfort is all burdensome to me.

I long to enjoy Thee intimately, but cannot attain unto it.

I desire to cleave to heavenly things, but things temporal and my unmortified passions weigh me down.

With my mind I wish to be above all things, but by the flesh I am forced against my will to be subject to them.

Thus, unhappy man that I am, I fight with myself and am become burdensome to myself, whilst the spirit tendeth upwards, and the flesh downwards.

5. Oh, what do I suffer interiorly, whilst with my mind I consider heavenly things; and presently a crowd of carnal thoughts interrupt me as I pray.

O my God, remove not Thyself far from me, and depart not in anger from Thy servant.

Dart forth Thy lightning, and disperse them; shoot Thy arrows, and let all the phantoms of the enemy be put to flight.

Cause my senses to be collected in Thee; make me forget all worldly things; grant me speedily to cast away and despise all worldly imaginations.

Come to my aid, O eternal Truth, that no vanity may move me.

Come, heavenly sweetness, and let all impurity fly from before thy face.

Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive me, as often as in my prayer I think of aught else beside Thee.

For I truly confess that I am accustomed to be very much distracted.

For many a time I am not there where I am bodily standing or sitting, but am there rather where my thoughts carry me. There am I where my thought is: and there oftentimes are my thoughts where that which I love is.

That thing most readily cometh to my mind which naturally delighteth me, or which through custom is pleasing to me.

6. Whence Thou, the Eternal Truth, hast plainly said: Where thy treasure is, there also is thy heart.

If I love heaven, I love to think on heavenly things.

If I love the world, I rejoice at the world's prosperity, and am troubled at its adversity.

If I love the flesh, my imagination is often on the things of the flesh.

If I love the spirit, I delight to think of spiritual things.

For whatever things I love, of the same I love to speak and hear, and I carry home with me the images of such.

But blessed is that man who for Thee, O Lord, abandoneth all things created; who offereth violence to nature, and through fervor of spirit crucifieth the concupiscence of the flesh; that so, with a serene conscience, he may offer to Thee pure prayer, and become worthy to be admitted among the choir of Angels, having shut out all things of the earth, both from without and within.

THAT WE OUGHT TO DENY OURSELVES, AND IMITATE CHRIST BY THE CROSS.

SON, as much as thou canst go out of thyself, so much wilt thou be able to enter into Me.

As the desiring nothing exteriorly bringeth peace, so doth the relinquishing thyself interiorly unite thee unto God.

I will have thee learn the perfect renunciation of thyself, according to My will, without contradiction or complaint.

Follow me: I am the way, the truth, and the life.

Without the way, there is no going; without the truth, there is no knowing; without the life, there is no living.

I am the way which thou must follow; the truth which thou must believe; the life which thou must hope for.

I am the way inviolable, the truth infallible, the life interminable.

I am the straightest way, the sovereign truth, the true life, the blessed life, the uncreated life.

If Thou abide in My way, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt attain to life everlasting

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

If thou wilt know the truth, believe Me: if thou wilt be perfect, sell all.

If thou wilt be My disciple, deny thyself.

If thou wilt possess a blessed life, despise this present life.

If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thyself in this world.

If thou wilt reign with Me, bear the cross with Me.

For none but the servants of the cross find the way of bliss and true light.

3. Lord Jesus, forasmuch as Thy way is narrow, and despised by the world, grant that I may follow Thee with the world's contempt.

For the servant is not greater than his lord, neither is the disciple above his master.

Let Thy servant be exercised in Thy life, for there is my salvation and true sanctification.

Whatever beside this I read or hear doth neither recreate nor fully delight me.

4. Son, since thou knowest these things, and hast read them all, happy shalt thou be if thou do them.

He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him, and will make him sit with Me in the kingdom of My Father.

5. Lord Jesus, as Thou hast said and hast promised, so let it be indeed, and may it be my lot to merit it.

I have received, I have received from Thy hand, the Cross; I will bear it, and bear it even unto death, as Thou hast laid it upon me.

Truly, the life of the good religious is a cross; but it is also the guide to paradise.

We have begun; we may not go back, nor may we leave off.

6. Take courage, brethren; let us go forward together; Jesus will be with us.

For the sake of Jesus, we have taken up this cross; for Jesus' sake, let us persevere in it.

He will be our Helper, who is our Captain and our Forerunner.

Behold, our King marcheth before us, who will fight for us.

Let us follow Him manfully; let no one fear terrors; let us be ready to die valiantly in battle; nor let us bring disgrace upon our glory by flying from the Cross.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST.

Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith the Lord.

The bread that I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world.

Take ye and eat; this is My body, which shall be delivered for you; this do for the commemoration of Me.

He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him.

The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

WITH HOW GREAT REVERENCE CHRIST OUGHT TO BE RECEIVED.

The Voice of the Disciple.

THESE are Thy words, O Christ, the eternal Truth, though not all uttered at one time, nor written in one place.

Since, therefore, they are Thine, and true, they ought all to be thankfully and faithfully received by me.

They are Thine, and Thou hast spoken them; and they are also mine, because Thou hast delivered them for my salvation.

I willingly receive them from Thy mouth, that they may be the more inseparably ingrafted in my heart.

Words of so great tenderness, so full of sweetness and love, encourage me; but my own sins terrify me, and an unclean conscience keeps me back from receiving so great mysteries.

The sweetness of Thy words beckoneth me onwards; but the multitude of my offences weigheth me down.

2. Thou commandest me to approach Thee with confidence, if I would have part with Thee; and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain life and glory everlasting.

Come, sayest Thou, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

O sweet and loving word in the ear of a sinner, that Thou, O Lord my God, dost invite the poor and needy to the Communion of Thy most holy Body.

But who am I, O Lord, that I should presume to approach unto Thee?

Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; and Thou sayest, Come ye all to Me.

3. What meaneth this most loving condescension and so friendly invitation?

How shall I dare to approach, who am conscious to myself of no good on which I can presume?

How shall I introduce Thee into my house, who have too often offended Thy most benign countenance?

The Angels and the Archangels stand in reverential awe; the Saints and the just are afraid; and Thou sayest, Come ye all to Me.

Unless Thou, O Lord, didst say this, who could believe it to be true?

And unless Thou didst command it, who would venture to approach?

4. Behold, Noe, a just man, labored a hundred years in building the ark, that with a few he might be saved: and how, then, shall I be able in the space of one hour to prepare myself to receive with reverence the Maker of the world?

Moses, Thy great servant and Thy special friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which also he covered with most pure gold, that he might deposit therein the tables of the law; and I, a corrupted creature, shall I presume so easily to receive Thee, the Maker of the law and the Giver of life?

Solomon, the wisest of the kings of Israel, employed seven years in building a magnificent temple for the praise of Thy name, and for eight days he celebrated the feast of the dedication thereof; he offered a thousand peace-making victims, and brought in a solemn manner the Ark of the Covenant into the place prepared for it, with sound of trumpet and rejoicing: and I, unhappy, and the vilest of men, how shall I introduce Thee into my house, who can hardly spend one half-hour devoutly? And would that I had ever even spent one half-hour as I ought!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavor to do to please Thee! Alas, how little is it that I do! How short a time do I spend when I prepare myself to communicate!

Seldom am I wholly collected, very seldom free from all distraction.

And yet, surely, in the life-giving presence of Thy Deity, no unbecoming thought should occur, nor any thing created occupy my mind; for it is not an Angel, but the Lord of the Angels, whom I am about to entertain.

6. There is, moreover, a very great difference between the Ark of the Covenant, with its relics, and Thy most pure Body, with its unspeakable virtues; between those sacrifices of the law, which were figures of things to come, and the true Sacrifice of Thy Body, which is the accomplishment of all ancient sacrifices.

7. Why, then, am I not more inflamed in seeking Thy adorable presence?

Why do I not prepare myself with greater solicitude to receive Thy sacred gifts, seeing that those ancient holy Patriarchs and Prophets, yea kings also, and princes, with the whole people, manifested so great affection of devotion towards Thy divine worship?

8. The most devout King David danced with all his might before the Ark of God, as he called to mind the benefits in times past bestowed upon the fathers: he made musical instruments of various kinds; he composed psalms, and appointed them to be sung with joy, and he himself likewise often sung them upon his harp, inspired with the grace of the Holy Ghost; he taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole heart, and with one harmonious voice to bless and praise Him every day.

If so great devotion was then displayed, and such a memorial of the praise of God made in presence of the Ark of the Covenant, how great a reverence and devotion now ought I and all Christian people to have in presence of this Sacrament, and in receiving the most precious Body of Christ!

9. Many run to sundry places to visit the relics of the Saints, and wonder to hear of their remarkable deeds; they behold the spacious buildings of their churches, and kiss their sacred bones, enveloped in silk and gold:

And behold, Thou art here present to me on the altar, my God, the Saint of Saints, the Creator of men, and the Lord of Angels.

Oftentimes in seeing those things men are moved with curiosity and the novelty of sights, and carry home but little fruit of amendment; and the more so when persons lightly run hither and thither without real contrition.

But here, in the Sacrament of the altar, Thou art wholly present, my God, the Man Christ Jesus; where also is derived, in full copiousness, the fruit of eternal salvation, as often as Thou art worthily and devoutly received.

To this, indeed, we are not drawn by any levity, curiosity, or sensuality, but by a firm faith, a devout hope, and a sincere charity.

10. O God, unseen Creator of the world, how wonderfully

dost Thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost Thou order all things for Thy elect, to whom Thou offerest Thyself to be received in this Sacrament!

For this exceedeth all understanding; this in a particular manner draweth the heart of the devout, and enkindleth their love.

For they, Thy true faithful ones, who dispose their whole life to amendment, frequently receive from this most august Sacrament a great grace of devotion and love of virtue.

11. Oh, the wonderful and hidden grace of the Sacrament, which only the faithful of Christ know, but which unbelievers, and such as are slaves to sin, cannot experience!

In this Sacrament is conferred spiritual grace; virtue lost is again restored in the soul; and beauty disfigured by sin returneth again.

So great sometimes is this grace, that from the fulness of the devotion conferred, not only the mind, but the frail body also feeleth an increase of strength bestowed on it.

12. Still must we lament and deplore exceedingly our tepidity and negligence, that we are not drawn with greater affection to receive Christ, in whom consisteth all the hope and merit of those that are to be saved.

For He is our sanctification and our redemption; He is the consolation of pilgrims, and the eternal fruition of the Saints.

Greatly to be lamented, therefore, is it, that many take so little heed of this saving Mystery, which rejoiceth heaven, and preserveth the whole world.

Oh, blindness and hardness of the heart of man, that doth not more regard so unspeakable a gift, and even from a daily use of it falleth into a disregard of it!

13. For if this most holy Sacrament were celebrated in one place only, and consecrated by only one Priest in the world, with how great a desire, thinkest thou, would men be affected towards that place, and to such a Priest of God, that they might see the Divine Mysteries celebrated?

But now that there are many Priests, and Christ is offered up in many places, that the grace and love of God to man may appear so much the greater, by how much the more bounteously

is this sacred Communion distributed throughout the entire world.

Thanks be to Thee, O good Jesus, eternal Shepherd, who has vouchsafed to feed us poor exiles with Thy precious Body and Blood, and to invite us to the receiving these mysteries, even by the words of Thy own mouth, saying, Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

THAT THE GREAT GOODNESS AND LOVE OF GOD ARE SHOWN TO MAN IN THIS SACRAMENT.

The Voice of the Disciple.

CONFIDING, O Lord, in Thy goodness, and in Thy great mercy, I come sick to my Saviour, hungry and thirsty to the Fountain of life, needy to the King of heaven, a servant to my Lord, a creature to my Creator, and one in desolation to my loving Comforter.

But whence is this to me, that Thou shouldst come to me? who am I, that Thou shouldst give me Thyself?

How dare a sinner appear before Thee? and how dost Thou vouchsafe to come to a sinner?

Thou knowest Thy servant, and dost know that he has nothing of good in himself, wherefore Thou shouldst bestow this upon him.

I confess, therefore, my unworthiness; I acknowledge Thy bounty; I praise Thy goodness; and I give Thee thanks for Thy exceeding love.

For it is for Thy own sake Thou dost this; not on account of my merits, but that Thy goodness may be the more manifest to me, that Thy love may be more abundantly imparted, and Thy humility more perfectly commended.

Since, therefore, this pleaseth Thee, and Thou hast ordained it thus, Thy merciful condescension pleaseth me also; and oh, that my iniquity may be no obstacle!

2. O most sweet and most benign Jesus, how great reverence and thanksgiving, with perpetual praise, are due to Thee for the receiving of Thy sacred Body, whose dignity no man be found able to unfold!

But on what shall I think in this Communion, when I approach to my Lord, whom I can never duly venerate, and yet desire to receive with devotion?

What can I think on better or more salutary than to humble myself entirely before Thee, and extol Thy infinite goodness above me?

I praise Thee, O my God, and I extol Thee for ever; I despise myself, and cast myself down into the depth of my own vileness.

3. Behold, Thou art the Saint of Saints, and I am the scum of sinners.

Behold, Thou bowest Thyself down to me, who am not worthy to look up to Thee.

Behold, Thou comest to me; Thou wishest to be with me, Thou invitest me to Thy banquet; Thou desirest to give me heavenly food, even the bread of Angels, to eat; no other, indeed, than Thyself, the living Bread, who didst come down from heaven, and givest life to the world.

4. Behold, whence love proceedeth; what a condescension shineth forth! how great thanksgiving and praise are due to Thee for these!

Oh, how salutary and profitable was Thy design when Thou didst institute it! now sweet and delightful this banquet, wherein Thou hast given Thyself for our food!

Oh, how admirable is Thy work, O Lord! how mighty is Thy power! how infallible Thy truth!

For Thou hast spoken, and all things were made, and that which Thou commandest has been done.

5. A wonderful thing it is, and worthy of faith, and transcending all human intelligence, that Thou, O Lord my God, true God and man, are contained entire under a small form of bread and wine, art eaten by the receiver, and without being consumed.

Thou, the Lord of all things, who standest in need of no one art pleased by this Sacrament to dwell in us.

Preserve my heart and my body without stain, that, with a joyful and pure conscience, I may often be able to celebrate Thy sacred Mysteries, and receive for my eternal salvation what

Thou hast principally ordained and instituted for Thy honor and perpetual remembrance.

6. Rejoice, O my soul, and give thanks unto God for so noble a gift, and so singular a solace left to thee in this valley of tears.

For as often as thou repeatest this Mystery and receivest the Body of Christ, so often dost thou perform the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of all the merits of Christ.

For the charity of Christ is never diminished, and the greatness of His propitiation is never exhausted.

Therefore oughtest thou to dispose thyself for this by an ever-recurring renovation of spirit, and weigh with attentive consideration the great mystery of salvation.

And as often as thou celebratest or hearest Mass, it ought to seem to thee as great, new, and delightful, as if Christ that very day first descending into the Virgin's womb was made man; or hanging on the Cross, suffered and died for man's salvation.

THAT IT IS PROFITABLE TO COMMUNICATE OFTEN.

The Voice of the Disciple.

Behold, I come to Thee, O Lord, that, by Thy gift, it may be well with me, and that I may be delighted in Thy holy banquet, which Thou, O God, in Thy sweetness hast prepared for the poor.

Behold, in Thee is all that I can or ought to desire; Thou art my salvation and redemption, my hope and my strength, my honor and my glory.

Make, therefore, the soul of Thy servant joyful this day, because unto Thee, O Lord Jesus, have I lifted up my soul.

Now do I desire to receive Thee devoutly and reverently; I long to bring Thee into my house, so that, with Zaccheus, I may deserve to be blessed by Thee, and to be numbered amongst the children of Abraham.

My soul longeth eagerly after Thy Body, my heart desireth to be united with Thee.

2. Give Thyself to me, and it is enough; for without Thee no comfort is of any avail.

Without Thee I cannot exist; and without Thy visitation I am unable to live.

Therefore must I often come to Thee, and receive Thee as the medicine of my salvation, lest perhaps I faint in the way, should I be deprived of this heavenly food.

For so Thou, O most merciful Jesus, when Thou hadst been preaching to the people, and curing their various maladies, didst once say, I will not send them fasting to their home, lest they faint by the way.

Deal with me, therefore, in like manner, who has left Thyself in this Sacrament for the comfort of the Faithful.

For Thou art the sweet refection of the soul, and he that shall eat Thee worthily shall be partaker and heir of everlasting glory.

Necessary, indeed, is it for me, who so often fall and commit sin, so quickly grow torpid and faint, that by frequent prayers and confessions, and by the sacred receiving of Thy Body, I may again be renewed, cleansed, and inflamed, lest perhaps, by longer abstaining, I fall away from my holy purpose.

3. For the senses of man are prone to evil from his youth, and unless the divine medicine succor him, he quickly falleth to worse things.

The holy Communion, therefore, withdraweth from evil, and strengtheneth in good.

For if now I am so often negligent and lukewarm, whenever I communicate or celebrate,* what would it be if I did not take this remedy, and did not seek so great a help?

And although I am not every day prepared, yet I will endeavor at proper times to receive the divine Mysteries, and to make myself partaker of so great a grace.

For this is the one chief consolation of a faithful soul, so long as she sojourneth afar off from Thee in this mortal body, that, mindful of her God, she receives her Beloved with a devout mind.

4. O wonderful condescension of Thy affection towards us! that Thou, O Lord God, the Creator and Giver of life to all spirits, shouldst vouchsafe to come to a poor soul, and with

* It will be observed that portions of this chapter are applicable only to priests

Thy whole divinity and humanity to feast her hunger with fatness.

O happy mind and blessed soul? which deserveth to receive Thee, her Lord God, devoutly, and in receiving Thee to be filled with spiritual joy.

Oh, how great a Lord doth she entertain! how beloved a Guest doth she bring into her house, how sweet a Companion doth she receive, how faithful a Friend doth she welcome, how beautiful and noble a Spouse doth she embrace, to be loved above all beloved, and beyond all that can be desired.

Let heaven and earth, O my most sweet Beloved, with all their attire, be silent before Thy face; for whatever of glory or beauty they possess, all is the gift of Thy bounty, nor can they attain to the beauty of Thy name, whose wisdom is beyond all numbers.

THAT MANY BENEFITS ARE BESTOWED ON THOSE WHO COMMUNICATE DEVOUTLY.

The Voice of the Disciple.

O Lord my God, present Thy servant with the blessings of Thy sweetness, that I may deserve to approach worthily and devoutly to Thy magnificent Sacrament.

Raise up my heart towards Thee, and deliver me from oppressive slothfulness.

Visit me with Thy saving mercy, that I may taste in spirit Thy sweetness which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament as in a fountain.

Illuminate also my eyes, to behold so great a Mystery, and strengthen me to believe it with an undoubting faith.

For it is Thy work, not the power of man; Thy sacred institution, not man's invention.

For no one can be found capable of himself to conceive and understand these things, which transcend even the intelligence of the Angels.

What, then, of so high and sacred a mystery shall I, an unworthy sinner, who am but dust and ashes, be able to investigate or comprehend?

2. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart, with a good and firm faith, and at Thy command, I come to Thee with hope and reverence; and do verily believe that Thou art here present in the Sacrament, both God and Man.

Thou willest, then, that I receive Thee, and unite myself to Thee in charity.

Wherefore I beseech Thy clemency, and I beg of Thee to give me a special grace, that I may be wholly dissolved in Thee, and overflow with Thy love, and no more concern myself about any other kind of consolation.

For this most high and most worthy Sacrament is the health of soul and body, the medicine of every spiritual malady, in which my vices are cured, my passions restrained, temptations overcome or lessened, greater grace infused, incipient virtue increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened, and charity inflamed and enlarged.

3. For Thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow, many good things in this Sacrament to Thy beloved who communicate devoutly, O my God, the support of my soul, the repairer of human infirmity, and the giver of all interior consolation.

For thou impartest unto them much consolation against their various tribulations, and Thou liftest them up from the depth of their own dejection to the hope of Thy protection, and Thou dost interiorly recreate and enlighten them with a certain new grace; so that they who first were anxious, and without sensible affection before Communion, after being refreshed with this heavenly food and drink find themselves changed for the better.

And in such a way Thou art pleased to deal with Thy elect, that they may more truly acknowledge and plainly experience how great is their weakness when left to themselves, and how much of bounty and grace they receive from Thee.

For of themselves they are cold, dry, and indevout; but by Thee they merit to become fervent, cheerful, and devout.

For who, humbly approaching to the fountain of sweetness, doth not carry thence some little sweetness?

Or who, standing by a copious fire, doth not derive therefrom some little heat?

And Thou art a fountain ever full and overflowing; Thou art a fire always burning and never failing.

4. Wherefore, if I may not draw out of the fulness of the fountain, nor drink to satiety, I will at least set my mouth to the opening of this heavenly pipe, that so I may draw thence some little drop to allay my thirst, and may not wholly wither away.

And if as yet I cannot be all heavenly and all on fire, like the Cherubim and Seraphim, I will still endeavor to follow after devotion, and to prepare my heart, that so I may acquire some small spark of divine fire by humbly receiving this lifegiving Sacrament.

And whatever is wanting to me, O good Jesus, most holy Saviour, do Thou in Thy bounty and goodness supply for me, who hast vouchsafed to call all unto Thee, saying, Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I labor, indeed, in the sweat of my brow, I am tortured with grief of heart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations, I am entangled and oppressed with many evil passions; and there is no one to help me, no one to deliver and save me, but Thou, O Lord God, my Saviour, to whom I commit myself and all that is mine, that Thou mayest keep me, and bring me to everlasting life.

Receive me for the praise and glory of Thy Name, who hast prepared Thy Body and Blood for my food and drink.

Grant, O Lord God, my salvation, that with the frequenting of this Thy Mystery may increase the affection of my devotion.

OF THE DIGNITY OF THE SACRAMENT, AND OF THE PRIESTLY STATE.

The Voice of the Beloved.

If thou hadst the purity of an Angel, and the sanctity of St. John the Baptist, thou wouldst neither be worthy to receive nor to handle this Sacrament.

For this is not due to a man's merits, that a man should consecrate and handle the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the bread of Angels.

Great is the Mystery, and great the dignity of Priests, to whom is given that which is not granted to the Angels.

For Priests alone, rightly ordained in the Church, have the power of celebrating and consecrating the Body of Christ.

A Priest, indeed, is the minister of God, using the word of God, by the command and institution of God; but God is there the principal author and invisible worker, to whom all whatsoever He willeth is subject, and all whatsoever He commandeth is obedient.

More oughtest thou, therefore, to credit God the Omnipotent, in this most excellent Sacrament, than thy own sense or any visible sign. And therefore thou oughtest to approach this work with fear and reverence.

Take heed to thyself, and see what kind of ministry has been delivered to thee by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop.

Behold, thou art made a Priest, and art consecrated to celebrate; see now that faithfully and devoutly, in due time, thou offer up Sacrifice to God, and that thou show thyself blameless.

Thou hast not lightened thy burden, but art now bound by a stricter bond of discipline, and art obliged to greater perfection of sanctity.

A Priest ought to be adorned with all virtues, and to set the example of a good life to others.

His conversation should not be with the popular and common ways of men, but with the angels in heaven, or with perfect men upon earth.

3. A Priest, clad in sacred vestments, is Christ's vicegerent, that he may suppliantly and humbly pray to God for himself and all the people.

He hath before and behind him the sign of the Cross of our Lord, that he may ever remember the Passion of Christ.

Before him he beareth the cross on the chasuble, that he may diligently behold the footsteps of Christ, and fervently endeavor to follow after them.

Behind him he is marked with the cross that he may mildly suffer for God's sake whatsoever adversities befall him from others.

He weareth the cross before, that he may bewail his own sins;

and behind, that through compassion he may lament the sins of others, and know that he is placed in the midst, between God and the sinner.

Neither ought he to grow weary of prayer and holy Oblation, until he deserve to obtain grace and mercy.

When a Priest celebrateth, he honoreth God, he rejoiceth the Angels, he edifieth the Church, he helpeth the living, he obtaineth rest for the departed, and maketh himself partaker of all things.

A SELF-INTERROGATION CONCERNING THE EXERCISE PROPER BEFORE COMMUNION.

The Voice of the Disciple.

When I consider Thy dignity, O Lord, and my own vileness, I am affrighted exceedingly, and am confounded within myself.

For if I do not approach Thee, I fly from life; and if I intrude myself unworthily, I incur Thy displeasure.

What, then, shall I do, O my God, my Helper and Counsellor in necessities?

2. Do Thou teach me the right way; set before me some short exercise suitable for the Holy Communion.

For it is well to know after what manner, indeed, I ought devoutly and reverently to prepare my heart for Thee, for the profitable receiving of Thy Sacrament, as well as for celebrating so great and divine a Sacrifice.

OF THE EXAMINATION OF OUR OWN CONSCIENCE, AND OF A RESOLUTION OF AMENDMENT.

The Voice of the Beloved.

Above all things, it behooveth the Priest of God to come to the celebrating, handling, and receiving this Sacrament with the greatest humility of heart and lowly reverence; with a full faith, and a pious intention for the honor of God.

Examine diligently thy conscience, and to the best of thy power cleanse and purify it by true contrition and humble confession; so that thou neither have nor know of anything

weighty, which may give thee remorse, and hinder thy free access.

Hold in displeasure all thy sins in general, and more especially grieve and lament for thy daily offences.

And if time admit, confess to God, in the secrecy of thy heart, all the miseries of thy passions.

2. Sigh and grieve that thou art still so carnal and worldly, so unmortified from thy passions.

So full of the motions of concupiscence; so unguarded in thy outward senses; so often entangled with many vain imaginations.

So much inclined to exterior things; so negligent as to the interior.

So prone to laughter and dissipation; so hard to tears and compunction.

So inclined to relaxation, and to the pleasures of the flesh; so sluggish to austerity and fervor.

So curious to hear news and to see sights; so remiss to embrace humiliation and objection.

So covetous to possess much; so sparing in giving, so close in retaining.

So inconsiderate in talking; so little able to hold thy peace.

So disordered in thy manners; so over-eager in thy actions.

So immoderate in food; so deaf to the Word of God.

So ready for repose; so slow to labor.

So wakeful to hear idle tales; so drowsy at the sacred vigils.

So hasty to finish thy devotions; so wandering in attention.

So negligent in saying thy office; so tepid in celebrating; so dry in communicating.

So quickly distracted; so seldom fully recollected within thyself.

So suddenly moved to anger; so apt to take offence at others.

So prone to judge; so severe in reprehending.

So joyful in prosperity; so weak in adversity.

So often proposing many good things; and bringing so little to effect.

3. Having confessed and bewailed these and other thy defects with sorrow, and great displeasure at thy own weakness make a

strong resolution of always amending thy life, and of advancing in virtue.

Then with an entire resignation, and with thy whole will, offer thyself up to the honor of My Name, on the altar of thy heart, as a perpetual holocaust; faithfully committing to Me both thy soul and body.

That thou so mayest be worthy to approach to offer up Sacrifice to God, and to receive for thy salvation the Sacrament of My Body.

4. For there is no oblation more worthy, nor satisfaction greater for the washing away of sins, than to offer thyself purely and entirely to God, together with the Oblation of the Body of Christ, in the Mass and in the Communion.

If a man does what lieth in him, and is truly penitent, as often as he shall approach to Me for pardon and grace, I live, saith the Lord, who willeth not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live; wherefore I will no longer remember his sins, but all shall be forgiven him.

OF THE OBLATION OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS, AND OF THE RESIGNATION OF OURSELVES.

The Voice of the Beloved.

As I willingly offered Myself to God the Father for thy sins, with my hand stretched out upon the Cross, and My Body naked so that nothing remained in Me which was not completely turned into a Sacrifice to appease the Divine wrath: even so oughtest thou willingly to offer thyself to Me daily in the Mass; as heartily as thou canst, with thy whole energies and affections, for a pure and holy oblation.

What more do I require of thee, than that thou endeavor to resign thyself entirely to Me?

Whatsover thou givest except thyself, I regard not; for I seek not thy gift, but thee.

2. As it would not suffice thee, if thou hadst all things except Me, so neither can it please Me, whatever thou givest, unless thou offer Me thyself.

Offer thyself to Me, and give thy whole self for God, and thy offering shall be accepted.

Behold, I offered My whole self to the Father for thee; I have given My whole Body and Blood for thy Food, that I might be all thine, and thou mightest be always Mine.

But if thou wilt stand upon self, and not offer thyself freely to My will, thy offering is not complete, nor will there be an entire union between us.

A spontaneous oblation of thyself into the hands of God ought to precede all thy works, if thou wouldst obtain liberty and grace.

For therefore is it that so few become illuminated and internally free, because they know not how entirely to renounce themselves.

My sentence standeth sure: Unless a man renounce all, he cannot be My disciple.

Thou, therefore, if thou desirest to be My disciple, offer up thyself to Me with all thy affections.

THAT WE MUST OFFER OURSELVES, AND ALL THAT IS OURS, TO GOD, AND PRAY FOR ALL.

The Voice of the Disciple.

LORD, all things are Thine that are in heaven and upon earth.

I desire to offer myself up to Thee as a voluntary oblation, and to remain for ever Thine.

Lord, in the simplicity of my heart I offer myself to Thee this day, as Thy servant for evermore, for Thy homage, and for a sacrifice of perpetual praise.

Receive me with this sacred Oblation of Thy precious Body, which I offer to Thee this day in the invisible presence of assisting Angels, that it may be for salvation unto me and all Thy people.

2. Lord, I offer to Thee all my sins and offences, which I have committed in Thy sight and that of Thy holy Angels, from the day in which I was first capable of sin until this hour, upon Thy altar of propitiation; that Thou mayest at the same time burn and consume them all with the fire of Thy charity, and

mayest blot out all the stains of my sins, and cleanse my conscience from every fault, and restore unto me Thy grace, which I have lost by sin, fully pardoning me all, and mercifully receiving me to the kiss of peace.

3. What can I do for my sins but humbly confess and lament them, and incessantly implore Thy mercy.

Hear me, I beseech Thee, in Thy mercy, when I stand before Thee, O my God.

All my sins are exceedingly displeasing to me; I will never commit them any more; but I am sorry for them, and will be sorry for them as long as I live; and am prepared to do penance, and to make satisfaction to the utmost of my power.

Forgive, O my God, forgive me my sins, for the sake of Thy Holy Name.

Save my soul, which Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious Blood.

Behold, I commit myself to Thy mercy; I resign myself into Thy hands.

Deal with me according to Thy goodness, not according to my impiety and wickedness.

4. I offer also to Thee all my good works, though very few and imperfect; that Thou mayest amend and sanctify them; that Thou mayest have a pleasurable regard to them, and make them acceptable to Thee, and always make them tend to better; and mayest moreover conduct me, a slothful and unprofitable creature, to a blissful and glorious end.

5. I offer to Thee also all the pious desires of devout persons; the necessities of my parents, friends, brothers, sisters, and all those that are dear to me; and of all such as, for the love of Thee, have been benefactors to me or others; and who have desired and besought me to offer up prayers and Masses for themselves and all theirs, whether they are still living in the flesh or are already departed out of this world; that they may all experience the assistance of Thy grace, the help of Thy consolation, protection from dangers, and deliverance from the punishment to come; and that thus, freed from all evils, they may joyfully pay to Thee a noble sacrifice of praise.

6. I offer up also to Thee prayers, and this Sacrifice of Propi

tiation, for those in particular who have in any way injured me, grieved me, or abused me, or have inflicted upon me any hurt or injury.

And for all those likewise whom I have at any time grieved, troubled, oppressed, or scandalized, by words or deeds, knowingly or unknowingly; or that it may please Thee to forgive us all our sins and offences one against another.

Take, O Lord, from our hearts all suspicion, indignation, anger, and contention, and whatever else may wound charity and lessen brotherly love.

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on those that crave Thy mercy; give grace to the needy; and grant us so to live, that we may be worthy to enjoy Thy grace, and that we may attain unto life everlasting. Amen.

THAT THE HOLY COMMUNION IS NOT LIGHTLY TO BE FORBORNE.

The Voice of the Beloved.

THOU oughtest often to have recourse to the fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the fountain of goodness and all purity; that thou mayest be healed of thy passions and vices, and mayest deserve to be made stronger and more vigilant against all the temptations and deceits of the devil.

The enemy, knowing the very great fruit and remedy contained in the Holy Communion, striveth by every method and occasion, as far as he is able, to withdraw and hinder faithful and devout persons from it.

2. For when some are disposed to prepare themselves for the Sacred Communion, they suffer the worst assaults of Satan.

This wicked spirit himself, as it is written in Job, cometh among the sons of God, to trouble them with his accustomed malice, or to make them over-fearful and perplexed; that so he may diminish their devotion, or by his assault take away their faith, if haply they may altogether forbear Communion, or approach with tepidity.

But not the least regard must be had to his wiles and suggestions, be they ever so shameful and abominable; but all such imaginations are to be turned back upon his own head.

The wretch must be contemned and scorned; nor is Holy Communion to be omitted on account of any assaults and commotions which he may awaken.

3. Oftentimes also a person is hindered by too great a solici tude for having devotion, and a certain anxiety about making confession.

Follow herein the counsel of the wise, and lay aside all anxiety and scruple; for it impedeth the grace of God, and destroyeth the devotion of the mind.

Abandon not the Holy Communion for every trifling perturbation and heaviness; but go quickly to confession, and willingly forgive others all their offences.

And if thou hast offended any one, humbly crave pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What doth it avail thee to delay for a longer time thy confession, or to put off the Holy Communion?

Purge thyself as soon as p ssible, spit out the poison quickly, make haste to take the remedy, and thou wilt find it better for thee than if thou hadst deferred it for a longer time.

If to-day thou lettest it alone for this cause, to-morrow, perhaps, some greater will fall out; and so thou mayest a long time be hindered from Communion, and become more unfit.

As quickly as thou canst, shake off present heaviness and sloth; for it is to no purpose to continue long in uneasiness, to pass a long time in unquietness, and for these daily impediments to withdraw thyself from the divine mysteries.

Yea, rather, it is very hurtful to delay Communion long; for this usually bringeth on a heavy slothfulness.

Alas, some tepid and lax persons readily take occasion to delay going to their confession, and desire that their sacred Communion should be therefore deferred, lest they be obliged to give themselves to greater watchfulness.

5. Ah, how little charity and what slender devotion have they who so easily put off holy Communion!

How happy is he, and how acceptable to God, who so liveth, and keepeth his conscience in such purity, as to be prepared and well disposed to communicate every day, were it permitted to him, and he might pass without observation!

If sometimes a person abstaineth out of humility, or from some legitimate preventing cause, he is to be commended for reverence.

But if sloth creep in upon him, he must bestir himself, and do what lieth in him; and the Lord will second his desire according to his good will, which he chiefly regardeth.

6. And when, indeed, he is lawfully hindered, he should yet always have a good will and a pious intention of communicating, and so he will not be without the fruit of the Sacrament.

For every devout person may every day and every hour, without any prohibition, approach to a spiritual communion with Christ with much profit.

And yet on certain days, and at appointed times, he ought to receive sacramentally, with an affectionate reverence, the Body of his Redeemer; and rather aim at the praise and honor of God than seek his own consolation.

For as often as he communicateth mystically and is invisibly refreshed, so often doth he devoutly celebrate the Mystery of Christ's Incarnation and Passion, and is inflamed with His love.

7. But he who prepareth not himself otherwise than when a festival draweth near, or when custom compelleth, shall oftentimes be unprepared.

Blessed is he who offereth himself up as a holocaust to the Lord as often as he celebrateth or communicateth.

Be neither too slow nor too quick in celebrating; but observe the good common medium of those with whom thou livest.

Thou oughtest not to beget weariness or tedium in others; but keep the common way, according to the institution of Superiors, and rather accommodate thyself to the utility of others than follow thine own devotion and affection.

THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ARE MOST NECESSARY TO A FAITHFUL SOUL.

The Voice of the Disciple.

O SWEETEST Lord Jesus, how great sweetness is that of a devout soul feasting with Thee in Thy banquet, in which there is no other meat set before her to be eaten but Thyself, her

only Beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart!

And to me, indeed, it would be delightful, from my inmost affection, to pour out tears in Thy presence, and with loving Magdalen to wash Thy feet with my tears.

But where is this devotion, where is this so plenteous effusion of holy tears?

Of a truth, in Thy sight, and in that of Thy holy Angels, my whole heart ought to be inflamed and weep for joy.

For I have Thee in the Sacrament truly present, though hidden under another species.

2. For to behold Thee in Thine own real and Divine brightness mine eyes could not endure, neither could the whole world subsist in the splendor of the glory of Thy Majesty.

In this, therefore, Thou consultest my weakness, that Thou hidest Thyself under the Sacrament.

I truly possess and adore Him whom the Angels adore in heaven; I as yet awhile in faith, but they indeed by sight and without a veil.

I must be content with the light of true faith, and walk therein till the day of eternal brightness break forth, and the shadows of figures shall have passed away.

But when that which is perfect shall come, the use of Sacraments shall cease; for the Blessed in heavenly glory need not the sacramental medicine.

For they rejoice without end in the presence of God, beholding His glory face to face; and transformed from brightness to brightness of the abyss of the Deity, they taste the Word of God made flesh, as He was from the beginning, and remaineth for ever.

3. When I call to mind these wonders, every spiritual comfort whatsoever becomes even tedious to me; because as long as I behold not my Lord openly in His glory, I make no accountof all that I see and hear in the world.

Thou art my witness, O God, that no one thing can comfort me, nor any thing created give me rest, but only Thou, my God, whom I desire to contemplate for eternity.

But this is not possible so long as I sojourn in this mortal life.

And therefore I must set myself to much patience, and submit myself to Thee in every desire.

For thus also Thy Saints, O Lord, who now exult with Thee in the kingdom of heaven, whilst they were living, awaited in faith and much patience the advent of Thy glory.

What they believed, I believe; what they hoped, I hope for; and whither they are arrived, I trust that I also, through Thy grace, shall arrive.

In the meantime I will walk in faith, being strengthened by the examples of the Saints.

I shall have, moreover, for my consolation and a mirror of life, Thy holy Books, and above all these, Thy Most Holy Body, for my special remedy and refuge.

4. For in this life I find there are two things especially necessary for me, without which this miserable life would be to me insupportable.

Whilst detained in the prison of this body, I acknowledge that I need two things, viz. food and light.

Thou hast therefore given to me, weak as I am, Thy Sacred Body, for the nourishment of my soul and body, and Thou hast set Thy Word as a light to my feet.

Without these two I could not well live; for the Word of God is the light of my soul, and Thy Sacrament is the bread of life.

These also may be called the two tables set on either side in the storehouse of Thy Holy Church.

One is the table of the Holy Altar, having the holy bread, that is, the precious Body of Christ; the other is that of the divine law, containing holy doctrine, teaching a right faith, and leading most securely even into the interior of the veil, where is the Holy of Holies.

5. Thanks be to Thee, O Lord Jesus, Light of eternal Light, for the table of holy doctrine, which Thou hast ministered to us by Thy servants the prophets and apostles, and other teachers

Thanks be to Thee, O Thou Creator and Redeemer of men, who, to manifest to the whole world Thy love, hast prepared a great supper, wherein Thou hast set before us to be eaten, not the typical lamb, but Thy most Sacred Body and Blood, rejoic

ing all the faithful with Thy holy banquet, and inebriating them with the chalice of salvation, in which are all the delights of paradise; and the holy Angels do feast with us, but with a more happy sweetness.

Oh, how great and honorable is the office of Priests, to whom it is given to consecrate with sacred words the Lord of Majesty, to bless Him with their lips, to hold Him with their hands, to receive Him with their own mouths, and to administer Him to others!

Oh, how clean ought to be the hands, how pure the mouth, how holy the body, how immaculate the heart of the Priest, into whom the Author of Purity so often enters!

From the mouth of a Priest nothing but what is holy, no word but what is becoming and profitable, ought to proceed, who so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. Simple and chaste should be those eyes which are accustomed to behold the Body of Christ.

Pure and lifted up to heaven should be the hands which are used to handle the Creator of heaven and earth.

Unto Priests especialy it is said in the Law, Be ye holy; for I, the Lord your God, am holy.

8. Let Thy grace, O God omnipotent, assist us, that we who have undertaken the sacerdotal office may be enabled to serve Thee worthily and devoutly, in all purity, and with a good conscience.

And if we cannot live in so great innocency of life as we ought, grant us still duly to bewail the sins we have committed, and in the spirit of humility, and the purpose of a good will, to serve Thee more fervently for the future.

NOBLE LESSONS FROM HOLY LIVES

GLORIOUS EXAMPLES FOR THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE FAITH

ST. DOMINIC AND THE CHURCH OF ST. SABINA

THE Catholic traveller whose devotion leads him to some of those many churches of modern Rome which are in one way or another like volumes of the stories of saints can hardly fail to visit, among others, the Convent of Santa Sabina on the Aventine Hill, once the residence of St. Dominic, and which from his time to our own has ever continued to be occupied by his children. It is full of him and of his Order. There, as you stand outside, you may see green lanes winding down among the almond-trees to the long road of the Via Appia which lies below, where, by the wayside, stands the Convent of San Sisto, which he gave up to the nuns whom he planted there, while he himself came with his brethren to reside at Santa Sabina. One may fancy it the very path worn by the holy patriarch's feet on those daily visits which we are told he paid to his spiritual daughters; for it seems to have no other purpose than, as it were, to be a green cloister between the two churches of Santa Sabina and San Sisto. If you look above the door, as you pull the convent bell, you will see a half-defaced fresco, depicting one in the white habit and black mantle of the Friars-Preachers; while on either side are angels with torches in their hands, who seem lighting him on his way. It is St. Dominic, who was himself so escorted one night on his return to his convent, and whom the angels "left courteously" (as one of his biographers says) at this very door at which you stand. You step into the cloister; and before entering the church, you may see, in the little quadrangular enclosure, the orange-tree planted by his own hand. Lift the heavy curtain, and you stand within the church itself, scarcely altered in its general features, though six hundred years have passed since he kept his nightly vigils and disciplined himself to blood within its walls, or took his scanty rest leaning against one of those pillars on a stone you may see on the right hand

engraved with his name and preserved there for the veneration of the faithful. It is not a rich or highly ornamented church. No long line of chapels on either side dazzle the eye with their pictures; the nave is bare and unbroken in its severe and majestic solemnity. On the arch above the choir there is a mystic painting of sheep clustered on a grassy lawn round a fountain of running water; it preserves something of the character of those traditionary representations of Christ and His Apostles you may see in the old golden mosaics of the more ancient basilicas. And there are other paintings, which repeat to you again and again whole chapters of the early romantic chronicles of the Friars-Preachers. In one the young Napoleon is raised to life by the prayer of St. Dominic; in another, Hyacinth and Ceslaus receive the habit from his hands. That fresco stands over the very spot where the Apostle of Poland did indeed receive it; and it was in the ancient choir that stretches behind the altar that those two holy brothers, in their short novitiate of four months, learned saintliness enough at the feet of Dominic to be sent back at the end of that time to plant the new Order in their native land. There, now as then, you may see the Friars-Preachers chanting their evening office. Their habit has known no reforming change; it is the same as the day when B. Reginald received it from the hands of the Queen of heaven. There they sit, each one like the pictured heads of their own Angelico; and if you stay to the end, you will see what recalls the old times of which we have been speaking in a yet more striking way than aught you have seen beside. The compline psalms are ended, and the brethren rise as if to leave the choir. The old church is arranged in the usual basilica style, and the choir seats are behind the altar, which divides it from the nave. Separating into two ranks, the younger walking first, they come out on either side the altar, and pass along to the bottom of the nave, singing as they walk. It is the "Salve Procession." Every evening after compline in every convent of the order it is thus sung, and to the same sweet and antique strain; for the Friars-Preachers have their own music, like their own prayers. They reach the bottom of the nave, and, turning toward the altar, move up till they reach the middle; then, at the words "*Eia ergo*" all kneel, and the prior, walking through the kneeling ranks, sprinkles each one with holy water, and then returns to his place till the anthem is finished, when they go back in the same order as they came. And as you watch this singular and beautiful procession in the darkened nave of the old church, even if a stranger to the Dominican chroni-

cles, you will be in some way carried back to another age; for nothing in all that meets your eye has the character of our own day. The shaven heads before you might well be those of St. Dominic's first children: they are all young, and with the look on their countenances which devotion and austerity imprint upon a fervent youthfulness; for Santa Sabina is now the Dominican Novitiate and the centre of the strictest reformed observance. As they pass before you, it is like an old painting come to life, and the whole scene is one which any one may see has a history and an association. It is briefly this: When the great patriarch St. Dominic was called from this world to his eternal reward, he left the Order, which had been regularly established only four years previously, possessed of a footing in every country of Christendom. At the Second General Chapter, held at Bologna just before his death, the Order reckoned sixty convents in different parts of the world; and it was found necessary to divide the government into eight large provinces or nations. In short, the Friars-Preachers had taken possession of Christendom. In their first fervor they carried everything before them. Men listened with wonder to the preaching of men whose lives were more marvellous than their words; whether for the austerity and sanctity which they exhibited, or for those extraordinary graces which they were known to enjoy; so that they were said to hold in their convents as familiar intercourse with the blessed spirits as men are accustomed to hold one with another. Such was the familiarity that the brethren had with the blessed angels, says Castiglio, in his history of the Order, that oftentimes they saw and conversed with them, with that consolation and happiness which those only who taste the like can understand. Thus, of a certain novice at the Convent of Santa Sabina at Rome it is written that, being awake one night, and lying so on his bed in the dormitory, he heard steps passing that way, and looked out to see the cause. He saw three figures habited like friars, so that he indeed thought them three of the brethren. One of these walked first bearing the cross, another the vessel of holy water, and the third followed sprinkling the beds and the whole dormitory with the water, after a manner customary in the Order at that time. As he watched them, one of them spoke, and said to the others: "Brothers, we have now chased away all the demons from this dormitory; who is to be sent to the other parts of the house?" And he who carried the holy water replied: "Our Lord has sent other angels to them; our business was only with this place." Then the novice perceived that they were

angels, and not friars; and when their work was done they all three disappeared.

But the graces which they enjoyed, and which rendered their labors so successful in the conversion of souls, drew down on them the utmost fury of the malignant spirits. If the strange occurrences we find recorded in the early chronicles of the Order were related of one convent only, or on the evidence of one or two witnesses, we might be excused for giving them but little attention. But it was far otherwise. At one and the same time, throughout every convent of the Order, a storm of temptations and disturbances broke out, of so strange a character that none could doubt the source from whence it arose. At first these trials, though extraordinary in degree, were not supernatural in their kind; it was only that the brethren were tormented, now with temptations to indiscreet austerity, now with disgusts and weariness of their rule, so that many returned to the world. But very soon there were added to these horrible and alarming apparitions, specially in the two great convents of Paris and Bologna, where day and night the brethren were harassed, and well-nigh driven to despair, by the incessant assaults of their infernal enemies. The forms of hideous and unclean animals were seen in the dormitories and cells. Shapes of unspeakable horror met them as they went about, and the cries and voices and blasphemies of hell broke the silent hours of the night. Nor was it the young and inexperienced alone who testified to the existence of these things; the oldest and most saintly of the fathers were those who suffered most. One of these, a man of unimpeachable life, while in prayer in the Convent of Bologna, was heard to utter so great and terrible a cry that the other fathers ran to his assistance, and found him alive indeed, but without speech or power of motion. When they spoke to him, he did not answer; a trembling like death shook every limb, and his eyes remained ever fixed in one direction. And in this state he continued the whole of that night. In the morning, having a little recovered, the prior questioned him as to the cause. "Father," he replied, "do not ask me what I saw. I saw the devil; but in so horrible a manner that the marvel is, not that I am as you see me now, but rather that I still live. Were I to see that sight again on one hand, and the fiery furnace of hell on the other, I would rather leap alive into the fire than gaze for one moment on a thing so horrible." These dreadful visitations lasted more than three years, till the strength and courage of the brethren were well-nigh exhausted. Long vigils, and fasts, and many prayers wore out the

vigor of their bodily frames, while constant terror and anxiety weakened their spirits. They watched day and night before the Most Holy Sacrament in uninterrupted prayer; but still the troubles continued, and even increased, till the Order seemed threatened with destruction; for none had courage to embrace or persevere in a body which seemed to have become the butt of evil spirits. At length the subject was formally laid before the General Chapter held at Paris in 1224, during the government of Blessed Jordan of Saxony; and he ordered the procession during the *Salve* to be generally practised in every convent of the Order, in the manner in which it has been already described and has ever since been continued to be performed. The effects which followed on the adoption of this devotion were no less wonderful than the sufferings which gave rise to it. Everywhere the apparitions and other disturbances ceased. It seemed as though Mary had, in answer to her children's cry for help, come in person to chase away the powers of darkness, and to bless their choirs with the sensible manifestations of her own presence and protection. The stories which are related of her appearances in the Dominican churches during the singing of the *Salve* at this period have many of them a peculiar beauty. Nor were they witnessed by the brethren alone. It soon became a popular devotion to attend the singing of the *Salve* in the churches of the Friars-Preachers; and in the great church of St. James, at Paris, crowds met every evening after compline to witness the procession, which, performed as it was with unaffected earnestness and devotion, had so powerful an effect on the spectators that their sobs and tears were often heard mingling with the voices of the fathers. And some were rapt in ecstasies, and saw the church crowded with angelic spirits, and Mary in the midst; and watched her as she received the salutation of the brethren, and answered it bowing her head. Once she appeared visibly to the eyes of many, standing in front of the kneeling ranks, and looking down upon them as they sang. And when they came to the words, "*Et spes nostra, salve,*" she gravely and sweetly bowed her head. And as they sang those other words, "*Eia ergo advocata nostra,*" she turned to the altar, and prostrated herself at her Son's feet, and implored His mercy for her children. And again, as they said "*Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte,*" she answered the prayer by turning her soft and melting glance upon them, smiling with a joyful and benign countenance; so that the hearts of those who saw it were filled with gladness. Then at the last words, "*Et Jesum benedictum fructum ventris tui nobis post hoc exilium*

ostende," she took her Divine Child into her arms, and, holding Him before them, she seemed to show Him to them as they had prayed; and so disappeared. At another time she came down on the altar, which suddenly became brightly illuminated and surrounded by a vast number of celestial spirits, among whom she sat enthroned, with the Holy Infant in her arms. She listened as the anthem was sung, and continued to look down upon the brethren as they knelt turning toward her, until its close. Then she rose, and, taking the hand of the little Jesus, she made with it the holy sign above their heads and disappeared.

Such are some of the associations connected with the first institution of this singular devotion, rendering it something more than a curious relic of antiquity; for the interest attaching to it is not merely historical, but supernatural. It is not to be doubted that to our fathers, whose eye of faith was clearer than our own, it was often granted to see in visible shape some of those presences which sanctify the house of God.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND THE STUDENT.

Vision of Albert de Groot, Student of St. Anthony of Padua, Teacher of Thomas Aquinas.

THE scholars of the University of Padua, which had been famous for thirty years in the year 1220, were wont to amuse themselves, with more wit than discretion, at the expense of a little German student, who was at once the plaything of his companions and the victim of his masters; in short, the common butt of all. He came from the banks of the Danube; his name was Albert de Groot; and he was born at Lawingen, a little town of Swabia now fallen into decay, of a noble family. But he had little of the pride of nobility about him; and, indeed, how could the poor child be vain—heavy as he was, timid, encrusted with shyness, backward, without readiness of speech or any power of self-defence? He appeared so stupid that his pitiless companions called him "the ass." The Paduans Italianized his name, and joined to it the designation of his country; from Groto Tedesco they called him Grotesco, Groteschino, and other epithets equally flattering. In order to complete the satire, this name of Groot signified great, and the youth, though fifteen years old, was of a stature which would have been small for ten. All these circumstances rendered the life of the scholar full of thorns.

He was more sensible to all this raillery than he appeared; and

ST ANTHONY OF PADUA.

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA.

IN this picture we see the holy St. Anthony of Padua receiving in his arms from the hands of Our Blessed Lady the divine Infant Jesus. This divine favor of being permitted to embrace his Saviour was granted to the Saint in answer to his oft-repeated desire of enjoying the happiness of St. Joseph and Mary, by clasping his Saviour to his bosom.

This great saint, known as the thaumaturgus, or miracle-worker, was born in Lisbon in 1195, and received in baptism the name of Ferdinand. He afterward assumed the name of Anthony, in religion, and from his long residence in Padua has been known as Anthony of Padua. He went as a missionary among the heathen, hoping to be crowned with martyrdom; his marvellous gift of preaching was ascribed to inspiration; often more than thirty thousand people gathered around his pulpit, and the repentance of the throng drowned the voice of the preacher. Before his happy death, he received the crowning favor of heaven—the presentation to him of the Infant Saviour; and the many miracles performed through his intercession since his death are well attested by numerous witnesses.

DEVOTION

RESPONSORY.

If then you ask for miracles,
Death, error, all calamities,
The leprosy, and demons fly,
And health succeeds infirmities.

All dangers vanish at thy prayer,
And direst need doth quickly flee;
Let those who know thy power proclaim,
Let Paduans say: These are of thee.

The sea obeys and fetters break,
And lifeless limbs thou dost restore;
Whilst treasures lost are found again,
When young or old thine aid implore.

The sea obeys, and fetters break,
And lifeless limbs thou dost restore;
Whilst treasures lost are found again,
When young or old thine aid implore.

To Father, Son, may glory be,
And Holy Ghost eternally.

V. Pray for us, blessed Anthony.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

O God, may the votive commemoration of blessed Anthony, thy confessor, be a source of joy to Thy Church, that she may always be fortified with spiritual assistance and deserve eternal rewards. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

His Holiness, Pope Pius IX., by a decree of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, January 25th, 1866, granted to all the faithful, as often as they shall, with at least contrite heart and devotion, say this responsory, the versicle, and prayer annexed:

AN INDULGENCE OF ONE HUNDRED DAYS.—*Raccolta, p. 362.*

more than once he would have listened to the temptations of despair, if he had not had deeply implanted in his heart, by the care of a Christian mother, ardent piety, humble resignation, and a tender and lively devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

If he felt it hard to be called "the ass," yet, when he considered that he had neither readiness, memory, nor intelligence, he said to himself with a saddened heart that he probably deserved the epithet; and that the career of science which he so sincerely desired to embrace perhaps offered him no chance of success. On one occasion, after following a course of sermons from the Blessed Jordan of Saxony, who had just been chosen General of the Dominican Order, he was so strongly affected, he understood so well the holy orator, that he imagined it to be the will of God that he should retire from the world and enter this order of Preaching-Friars; if not to shine among the brilliant men who were its glory—he dared not aspire to such an honor as that—yet at least to save his own soul. He went therefore, at sixteen, to petition for the Dominican habit; and the new General, who came from his own country and spoke his own language, having given him a kind welcome, he was received into a convent of the Order, there to complete his studies.

But, alas! he found in the cloister the same sorrows he was seeking to avoid. His slow wit could take in nothing, or at least could express nothing; and though among his young brethren, the novices, he found more charity than in the turbulent students of the university, he saw well enough that he was looked upon as the lowest in the house. His piety and humility long bore him up; his courage did not fail for some time; he was constantly hoping that one day he should surmount all obstacles, and break the bonds which seemed to hold his mind captive. He took the vows, and became a monk; but still continued a backward scholar.

After two years of patience, he began to be thoroughly discouraged; he thought he had been mistaken—that perhaps he had yielded to an impulse of pride, in presenting himself to an Order whose mission was to preach to the people, to proclaim to the world the faith of Christ, and which consequently ought to be distinguished for science and genius as well as for virtue. He considered that he should never have either the power of logic or the mastery of eloquence; and he said to himself: "I have vowed my life to God; I know that He is good. When I shall appear before Him, He will not ask me whether I have spoken well, but whether I have lived well; not whether I have been learned, but whether I have been innocent;

not whether I have left fine writings, but whether I have done holy actions. At the same time, I am the most useless of His servants. But His holy will be blessed, He has no need of my assistance; I rashly desired to plead the august cause of Holy Church, to propagate the Catholic faith, to struggle against heresy. I forgot that God can raise whom it pleases Him; that He took to found His imperishable temple twelve ignorant fishermen. Blessed be His holy will! I will go, then, from this sweet cloister, where I am only a burden, and retiring apart, like the solitaries of old, will think of nothing but my own salvation. God repulses me from the career of science; but when I shall be alone with Him, I know He will never repulse me from His adored presence."

He was too timid to communicate this project to any one; he knew well that, like everything else that came out of his lips, it would only be received with mockery, and this he wished to avoid. The only *confidante* of his determination was the Blessed Virgin; before her altar he prayed assiduously and tenderly for nine days, imploring her support, and especially beseeching her to make known to him the will of God, which he was seeking and to which above all things he desired implicitly to submit.

On the night fixed for his departure he prayed at more length than usual; then, after waiting till all the convent was asleep, and placing himself under the guardianship of Mary, he went out of his cell, gained without noise the walls of the garden, fixed a ladder against them, and then, before placing his foot on the first round, knelt down again, and prayed to God not to condemn the step that he was taking, in leaving a house consecrated to Him; for that he would never cease to belong to Him, and to Him alone.

As he prepared to rise, he was suddenly struck by an unexpected sight. Was it a waking dream, or a miraculous favor that was granted him? He beheld—such, at least, is the legend handed down to us by his contemporaries—four majestic ladies advancing toward him. They were surrounded by a mild splendor, while their dignity, tempered as it was with grace and sweetness, inspired at once respect and confidence. The two first placed themselves in front of the ladder, as though to prevent him from ascending it. But there needed no constraint; for Albert, prostrate on the ground, felt assured that these radiant forms were not of this world, and remained in silent expectation.

The third lady, drawing near to him, asked him kindly why he thus despaired; and how he could resolve to fly thus shamefully

from his convent, and to throw himself without a guide into a world the dangers of which are so great. The scholar answered without rising from the ground, and humbly confessed his obstinate incapacity, which resisted all the efforts of his perseverance.

"It is," answered the lady, "because you seek in the mere human strength of your own weak mind the light which comes only from God. You have in the Queen of the world a protectress who loves you, and knows that you are her faithful servant; yet you have never prayed to her for the gift of knowledge; as though you were ignorant that all treasures are open to her, and that with her wisdom dwells. Behold her coming toward you in all her sweetness; pray to her without fear; our intercession will second you."

Then the scholar, recognizing in the fourth lady the Blessed Virgin, whose smile calms all sorrows, was emboldened to offer to her the prayer which was nearest to his heart. Hitherto he had only dared to ask the graces which tend to salvation; but now he considered that if he desired science, it was only for the sake of employing it for the glory of God, and that therefore it was a Christian request. Thus encouraged, and full of hope and confidence, he addressed himself to Mary, the Queen of the world, and prayed to her that he might be able to attain to the end of all his ardent desires—science.

"Science is great and various, my son," answered the fourth lady; "do you wish, then, to know everything; and do you not remember the history of our first parent, to whom the fallen spirit thus offered science without limit?"

"Oh, no, Blessed Virgin!" cried Albert, alarmed; "I only ask to know what it pleases God I should know. I desire not the dangerous power of sounding the secrets of Heaven; I only desire, and that within the limits of faith, philosophy and the science of nature."

"Human science?" answered the lady kindly. "It is vain, and full of perils; and perhaps, my son, you would have done better to prefer theology, which has the power of unveiling to the mind all that man can discover of the holy mysteries of God. But your prayer shall not be rejected. Only in the philosophy which you so love, beware of the pride which it often causes to spring up in the soul. Long shall you possess the gift; you shall pay for it by the labors which it will cause you, and the harsh judgments which men shall pass upon you; but be faithful, let not your heart be puffed up, and I promise you that this science, which has ruined so many souls, shall be withdrawn from you the moment it becomes dangerous to you."

The vision disappeared, and Albert, feeling himself quite changed, and comprehending the littleness of his past sorrows, remained for an hour on his knees, blessing God, fervently thanking the Blessed Virgin, questioning the prudence of his choice, dreading the perils of human science, humbling himself, and asking from God humility, henceforth his anchor and his strength. Then he took away his ladder and retired to his cell, where he tried in vain to sleep.

The next morning in the schools there was general amazement. Albert was another man; his former heaviness had given place to the liveliest and most subtle intelligence; nothing stopped him; he understood everything; the most abstruse problems unravelled themselves before him as clear as day; all that he heard, all that he read, was immediately classified in his memory, and remained there in its proper place. In one year he passed all his young companions, and eclipsed all his masters; so that all were amazed at the metamorphosis which had taken place, and said that some unknown miracle had changed an ass into a philosopher. And they were not mistaken; but none knew of the vision, for the humble scholar kept it secret. In a few years he became master in philosophy and was required to teach it, which he did in so superior a manner that he was ever after called the philosopher, as though he alone were worthy of that name.

He never left his convent except to hear sermons, and those of St. Anthony of Padua, who flourished at that time, especially charmed him and administered food to his spiritual life. He studied the natural sciences, and found in each created object a step whereby to rise toward the Creator; and, as he scarcely departed at all from the particular career which he had marked out for himself, he gave little attention to what is commonly called learning; though he occasionally visited the building which the Paduans exhibit as the house of Livy, and amused himself with deciphering the inscriptions found there.

At thirty years old, he was so universally instructed in all that belongs to philosophy and the knowledge of natural science that, like Picus of Mirandola in later times, he could reason and discuss on all that could be known according to the state of science at that epoch. The Order of St. Dominic was anxious to produce before the world this wonder formed in its bosom; and, accordingly, he was sent to Cologne to profess philosophy and theology, which last science he had studied, though with less success. At Cologne, at Hildesheim, at Fribourg, at Ratisbon, at Strasburg, he dazzled all

Germany, and gained admiration even more by his humility and modesty than by the depth of his doctrine and the immensity of his intellect. He never lived anywhere except in the convents of his Order, always chose the worst cell, and lived like the most obscure of his brethren.

The Blessed Jordan of Saxony having died in 1236, Albert was appointed Vicar-General of the Order of St. Dominic, an office which he administered for two years, while that of General was vacant; and it was manifest that the blessing of God was with him. The Chapter assembled at Bologna in 1238 for the election of a new General conferred on him this dignity; but he deprecated it with so much earnestness that they were obliged to yield to his humble entreaties, and, their choice next falling upon St. Raymond de Pennafort, who was absent, he went to Barcelona to hand over to him the seals of the Order, and hastened to return to his dear little cell at Cologne. There he resumed his studies and his lessons, and so many remarkable men shone forth among his scholars that it was thought desirable to send him to Paris.

The University of Paris, which was said to have been founded by Charlemagne, had been greatly enlarged by Louis the Young and gifted with many privileges by Philip Augustus. All men of high merit aspired to be professor there, and its scholars were counted by thousands, and formed within the city a distinct and ill-disciplined population, which often troubled the public peace. But the kings of France esteemed the protection of science a sacred duty; and St. Louis, who was reigning at the time of Albert's arrival, liked to see his people well taught, knowing that ignorance and imperfect instruction are the worst enemies of religion and morals, and therefore necessarily of the happiness of mankind.

As soon as the little monk of Cologne, whose frail form and modest bearing presented a lively contrast to his vast genius, had been once heard by the Parisians, he became the general topic of discourse in that excitable city. The wits, on account of his figure, called him Albert the Little; but the enthusiasts, on account of his merit, called him Albert the Great, unconscious that they were only translating his name. He became so much the fashion that the largest halls would not contain the number who thronged to hear his lectures, and he was therefore obliged to give them in a public square, which has ever since retained a trace of his name. It is called the Place Maubert, an abbreviation of Place Maitre Aubert, Aubert being the French rendering of the pretty German name of Albert. Among

the pupils of Albert at this time, 1245, was St. Thomas Aquinas, afterward so illustrious; and his preceptor already discerned in him that masterly genius which made him one of the brightest lights of the Church.

Some time after this, Albert returned to Cologne and was appointed Provincial of Germany, an office which he exercised for three years, but which never prevented him from continuing his public lectures. He also received a mission somewhat resembling that of the Sainte Enfance, which has been established by a venerable prelate in our own days. The Poles, who were still barbarians, had the dreadful custom of killing all their children who were born weakly or deformed; those also whom they had not adequate means of supporting, and all their old people who seemed useless. The Holy See, whose charity extends over the whole earth, charged Albert to go and contend against these savage customs, which perilous undertaking he accomplished with great success. The Pope wished to reward him by making him a Bishop, but he could not prevail over his humility. It was not till 1260 that he was compelled by his superiors to accept the bishopric of Ratisbon, the duties of which office he worthily fulfilled for four years, and then obtained from Urban IV. leave to return to his poor cell at Cologne, where, as in former times, he would not allow himself to be treated with more distinction than the lowest of his brethren. Here he set himself again to study, to continue his lectures, and to expound the Gospel. But, in spite of his love for retreat, he was obliged by his submission to the head of the Church to take many long journeys; he had to preach the Crusade throughout Germany, to speak at the Council of Lyons in 1274, and to mix himself up in all the important affairs of the Holy See.

Wherever he spoke, he worked wonders, and yet, up to the age of seventy-five, he had never experienced the slightest movement of vanity; when one day, preaching at Cologne, and seeing his immense audience electrified by his discourse, he lifted his head with somewhat more pride than usual, and was, perhaps for the first time, about to indulge a thought of self-admiration, when she who had so long protected him came to his assistance. He thought he beheld her; he stopped suddenly in the very middle of a learned period, and came down from the pulpit without bringing it to a close. He had lost his memory. The spirit of philosophy, which was the atmosphere in which he had lived, deserted him at the moment in which it was becoming dangerous, and he fell back into the state of dul-

ness which he had so much deplored at Padua. He understood the warning, and devoted all his thoughts to preparing himself for a holy death, which took place two years after, the 15th of November, 1282.

THE YOUNG CHORISTER.

THE town of Chartres, or rather the whole country which surrounds it, was before the Christian era the central point of the religion of the Gauls. There was the principal college of their Druids, over which a supreme pontiff ruled as president; and there also, according to ancient traditions, more or less supported by authority, the Druids had raised, in a vast grotto enclosed by a circle of ancient oaks, an altar to the Virgin who was one day to bring forth the Saviour of the world. This image we are told, represented a woman seated on a throne, with her Son on her knees, and robed in a long tunic down to the feet, with a mantle in the form of an antique chasuble, and a crown on her head of oak-leaves, and a veil hanging from it over the shoulders. The grotto in which it was placed is the crypt of the present cathedral, in which the early Christians celebrated the holy mysteries in time of persecution; and the town of Chartres has ever been under the especial protection of the Blessed Virgin, who has shown her favor to it by many miracles.

In the year 1116, in the reign of Philip I., on the evening of the 31st of October, there was a solemn procession in the subterranean church of Chartres, while hymns of praise were sung to Our Lady, the Queen of "All Saints," whose festival was to be celebrated the next day. The pious Bishop presided, while the crowd, fervent and recollected, sang with a devout heart. The monks and priests all held torches; at intervals, when the procession rested, the Bishop, with mitre on his head and crosier in his hand, blessed the faithful, surrounded by the young phalanx of choristers bearing tapers.

Among these children there was one especially remarked as being the most diligent and recollected, though he was but ten years old. He was the son of a poor widow, who found in him her treasure and her joy. It was said of him that he had divided his heart into three portions, of which he had given one to God, one to the Blessed Virgin, and one to his mother; and all these three affections were in full exercise. Never was he absent from a religious ceremony, never were the festivals of the Blessed Virgin celebrated without his being there to assist; he never seemed thoroughly happy except in

church; and when in the narrow streets of this ancient town a chance passer-by asked who he was, he never failed to answer with an innocent pride, "I am a chorister of Our Lady of Chartres."

The mother of this sweet child, as may be supposed, was very unwilling ever to have him out of her sight; and therefore she was, like him, assiduous in frequenting the house of God, and never ceased following him with her eyes, whether he was serving Mass, or carrying the little vessel of holy water, or whether, in attendance on the good Bishop, he formed one of the little band of whom Our Lord in an especial manner commanded that they should be suffered to come to Him.

On the evening of which we are speaking, this good mother was watching her little son, as he attended on the Bishop, and was first surprised, and then anxious, when, on the second turn of the procession, she missed him from the ranks of his young companions. The third turn came, and he had not reappeared. What could have become of him? When the function was over, the faithful retired; but the mother, who had been suffering for more than half an hour, hastened into the sacristy with a hurried though modest step, and in a low voice asked every one she met for tidings of her son. But no one had seen him disappear, and it was only then for the first time that they observed that he and his taper were missing.

They all sought him in vain; they explored every corner, every niche, every turn, but could find nothing; they called the child again and again, but no answer was made, so they concluded at last that he had either left the church unperceived, or had been carried away, or that he had fallen into a deep pit just behind the old altar of the Druids. There the mother ran, with her torch in her hand, and she had no sooner thrown the light on the mouth of the pit than she gave a cry of anguish which drew all the party to her side in an instant. At the bottom of the pit she thought she had espied a white surplice. The others looked in, but by the uncertain light of the torches they could see nothing. A mother's eye, however, was to be trusted, and by the Bishop's desire the most active of those in attendance let himself cautiously down to the bottom of the well, where he found the poor child, drowned, stiff, insensible, and frozen by death.

All stood round the mother in silent grief, none daring to attempt to console her; for she seemed quite stunned, in a way which struck awe into the hearts of all around her. The feeling, however, which so overpowered her, was not consternation, though it seemed like it:

it was an impossibility of believing that her son was really taken from her. As soon as the child was brought to the top of the pit, she seized him eagerly in her arms, and, rushing to the altar of Our Lady, she laid him all dripping as he was at the foot of the holy image, threw herself on her knees, and cried:

"Behold him, Blessed Virgin, this dear child whom we have lost. He is no longer mine, Lady of Chartres, he is yours; I have given him to you; I give him. But you know, dear Lady, that he loves you; he was under your protection; and you cannot surely suffer that he should not awake."

The tears of all present mingled with those of the widow full of faith; all knelt round, praying and sobbing. But few dared to hope that a child who had been an hour drowned could possibly revive; indeed, scarcely any except the good Bishop and the little choristers, whose young hearts dared to participate in the mother's hope. But faith prevailed; the child of miracle opened his eyes; he was at once surrounded and borne away from the altar, and his voice joined in the rapturous thanksgiving which immediately resounded through those ancient vaults.

When the first transports of joy were past, the child thus raised from the dead was immediately overwhelmed with questions; and he explained that, in trying to get to his place, he had been imprudent enough to pass behind the altar, and, not thinking of the pit, had fallen into it headlong. As all wondered that he had received no injury, and knew at the same time that he lost all consciousness of life during the hour that he had passed in the water, they asked him if he had seen, heard, or felt anything. "I felt nothing," he answered, "except a wonderful sensation of delight; I saw nothing except angels moving gently round me; and I heard nothing except their harmonious voices, which responded in the words of the Church to the Lord Bishop when he addressed to the faithful the *Pax vobiscum*. They also responded to the *Dominus vobiscum* of the priest."

The bishop was so struck with the wonderful circumstance that, in order to preserve the remembrance of it, he established a custom which has been observed ever since in the cathedral of Chartres; namely, that when the officiating bishop chants the *Pax vobiscum*, or a priest the *Dominus vobiscum*, whether at Mass, or at vespers, matins, or any of the canonical hours, the choir is silent, knowing that the angels are chanting the responses and that God is hearing them.

THE HOLY CHILD AND THE YOUNG NOVICES.

At the time that the celebrated Egidius was Provincial of Spain, he gave the habit of the Order to a young Gascon named Bernard, who was received into the Convent of Santarem, and became so distinguished among that saintly community for the holy simplicity of his life that Andrea of Rosende, in his Chronicle of Portugal, draws a parallel between him and his great namesake the Abbot of Clairvaux, "to whom," he says, "he bore no small resemblance, in a certain dove-like innocence and simplicity of manners." The circumstances attending his death, attested by almost all the writers on the history of the Order, are of peculiar beauty.

Bernard filled the office of sacristan in the Convent of Santarem, an office the exercise of which was peculiarly delightful to him, from the many opportunities it gave him of indulging his devotion unseen by any one but his Lord, whom he loved to honor by a reverent care of the altar and everything belonging to the divine mysteries. Besides this employment, his spare time was occupied in the education of two children, the sons of a neighboring gentleman, who sent them every day to the convent, where they remained until evening, only sleeping at their father's house. These two boys were permitted to wear the novices' habit of the Friars-Preachers, being probably destined for the order, although not as yet received into the community; and their innocence and goodness of disposition rendered them peculiarly dear to Blessed Bernard. It was his custom, when busy in the sacristy, to allow them to remain in a chapel then dedicated to the Holy Kings on the right of the high altar, where they used to sit on the altar-steps, reading, or writing their exercises; spending their time quietly and happily until their master's return. Here also they were accustomed to spread out the dinners which they brought with them from home, which they took together in the same place as soon as they had finished their daily lessons. On the altar of this chapel, which was seldom used for the purpose of saying Mass, there was an image of the Blessed Virgin, holding her Divine Son in her arms; and the two children came to look on the Holy Infant almost as a companion, and were wont to talk to Him, as He seemed to look down on them from His Mother's arms, with the simple familiarity of their age. One day, as they thus sat on the altar-steps, one of them raised his eyes to the image of the little Jesus that was just above him, and said: "Beautiful Child, how is it

you never take any dinner as we do, but always remain without moving all day long? Come down and eat some dinner with us—we will give it to you with all our hearts." And it pleased God to reward the innocence and simple faith of the children by a wonderful miracle; for the carved form of the Holy Child became radiant with life, and, coming down from His Mother's arms, He sat with them on the ground before the altar, and took some of their dinner with them. Now this happened more than once, so that the neglected chapel became to these two children full of the joy of heaven; and by daily converse with their Divine Lord they grew in such fervent love toward Him, that they wearied for the hour when they might have Him with them, caring for nothing else than this sweet and familiar intercourse with the Lord of heaven. And their parents perceived a change in them, and how their only pleasure was in hastening to the convent, as if it contained a secret source of happiness which had not been revealed before. They therefore questioned them closely, and the children told them everything without reserve. But the tale seemed to those who listened nothing but an idle invention, or perhaps an artifice in order to obtain larger quantity of food, and they therefore took no notice of what they said beyond reproving them for their folly.

But when they repeated the same story to Blessed Bernard, he listened with very different feelings; for he knew the holy hearts of his two little disciples, and he felt, moreover, that there was nothing unworthy of belief in the fact that He who, being God, became a little child, should condescend to give a mark of favor to those of whom He Himself has said that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." When, therefore, after many inquiries, he had satisfied himself of the truth of their tale, he bade them give glory to God for His goodness, and then considered whether there was no way in which these circumstances might be made to serve yet further to the happiness and sanctification of his pupils. And hearing how they, in their childish way, expressed a wonder that, after they had so often invited the Child to eat some of their dinner, He had never brought any food with Him to share with them, he bade them the next time He came ask Him how this was, and whether He would not also ask them some day to dine with Him in His Father's house. The boys were delighted with this idea, and they failed not to do as they were directed the next time that they were alone in the chapel. Then the Child smiled on them graciously, and said: "What you say is very just; within three days I invite you to a banquet in My

Father's house:" and with this answer they returned full of joy to their master. He well knew the meaning of this invitation. The change that had gradually appeared in his two beloved disciples had not been unmarked by him; he had seen them, as it were before their time, growing ripe for heaven, and he understood that it was the Divine pleasure, after thus training them for Himself in a marvellous way, that they should be transplanted to the angelic company, before their hearts had once been touched by the knowledge of sin or the contamination of the world. Yet he sighed to think that they should thus be granted to pass to Christ in their happy infancy, while he, who had grown old in the spiritual warfare, was to be left behind; and, resolving to make one more trial of the condescension which had been so bounteously lavished on his pupils, he bade them go back again to the chapel, and tell the divine Child that, since they wore the habit of the Order, it was necessary for them to observe the rules, and that it was never permitted for novices to accept of any invitation, or go to the house of any person, except in their master's company. "Return, then, to your master," said the Holy Child, "and bid him be of the company; and on Thursday morning I will receive you all three together in My Father's house."

Bernard's heart bounded with emotion when he heard these words. It was then the first of the Rogation days, and the day which had been appointed was therefore Ascension Day. He made every arrangement as for his approaching death, and obtained leave on that day to say the last Mass—his two disciples serving during the celebration and receiving communion from his hands. Doubtless it would be hard for us to realize his feelings of devout and joyful expectation during those moments. And when Mass was ended, he knelt before the same altar with the children, one on either side, and all three commended their souls to God, as though they knew their last hour was come and the altar-steps were to be their death-bed. And it was even so. An hour after, some of the brethren found them still kneeling thus before the altar, Bernard vested as for Mass, and the two boys in their serving-robes. But they were quite dead. Their eyes were closed, and their faces wore a smile of most sweet tranquillity, and it was evident that there had been no death-struggle, but that their souls had passed to the presence of God while in the very act of prayer. They were buried in the chapel of the Holy Kings, which had been the scene of so many of Our Lord's visits to the two children, and a picture was hung up over the spot,

representing them seated on the altar-step, with the Divine Child between them.

This was the only monument to mark the place of their burial, and in course of years the memory of it was lost, and the chapel became disused and neglected as before. One of the succeeding priors of the convent, wishing to find some further record of the ancient tradition, dug down beneath the spot indicated by the picture, taking care to have two apostolic notaries and the vicar-general of the diocese present, together with other authorities of distinction and credit. At a little distance beneath the surface a carved stone sarcophagus was found, which being opened, the church was immediately filled with an odor of surpassing sweetness; and, on removing the clothes that lay on the top, the remains of three bodies were discovered, which they could not doubt where those of Blessed Bernard and his novices; for the bones of the middle skeleton were of the size of a grown man, while those on either side were small and delicate. From the great number of years that had passed, most of them were reduced to mere dust, but some portions of white cloth showed that they had been buried in the habit of the Order.

DUKE REGNIER AND HIS BRIDE.

THE city of Mons, which owes its origin to the holy St. Vaudru more than to the old Roman camp of Cicero's brother, began to increase in importance in 874. Charlemagne, seventy years before, had raised it to the dignity of an earldom. The last Count of Mons, Albon II., had left his estates to his only daughter, Albraide. She was the happy bride of Regnier, surnamed the Long-heeled, a knight celebrated for his bravery no less than for his manly beauty. "Never, never," say the old chronicles, "had there lived a more devoted pair than Albraide and Regnier." Beloved by all their subjects, they were occupied in enlarging and adorning their city, which in those days did not occupy a third of the ground covered by the present beautiful and flourishing town, when a sudden invasion of Normans came upon them.

Many times already since the death of Charlemagne the northern barbarians had appeared like a whirlwind on the coasts of France. Baldwin of the Iron-arm had driven them from Flanders, but now messenger after messenger announced that their sails appeared riding over the waves, and bearing death and misery to France.

Regnier was brave; like Baldwin of the Iron-arm, he was of noble

blood, and like him, he called together his warriors and armed himself for battle. Albraide, weeping and anxious, hastened to shut herself in a little chapel which she had raised in honor of the Twelve Apostles, and where she spent the remainder of the day in tearful prayers for her country and her knight.

Meanwhile Regnier had advanced to Tournai, which he hoped to defend. But he had only been able to collect a handful of men, and the Normans came in legions. The fleet was headed by Rollo, or Rolf, the fiercest and the most dreaded of all the warriors of the north. Weary of his dangerous and adventurous life, he had vowed to take up his permanent abode in the richest country which earth could offer him; and the conquest of Hainault was one to kindle all his ambition. It was, therefore, with the fury of a baffled demon that Rolf advanced upon Regnier. He fought with desperate courage; he led forth a gigantic army; and the young count was driven back.

Battle upon battle did Regnier wage, still day by day repulsed and day by day returning to the charge with renewed courage. Before long, however, he was forced to acknowledge to himself that it was impossible to be victorious in open warfare against Rolf. He retired to the neighborhood of Condé, and there tried by ambushes and night attacks to harass the enemy.

One day Albraide knelt before the altar of the Apostles, when the sound of a footstep sent her blood to her heart. She turned. A messenger from her husband's camp stood before her. Glad indeed were the tidings which he brought. Regnier had captured Rollo's twelve principal generals. A holiday was proclaimed through all the castle; all hearts, from that of the Countess to her lowest serf, beat high with joy. And after reciting together with all her household a fervent Te Deum, Albraide retired to rest and to hopeful dreams.

Alas! on the next morning a woful change had fallen upon the castle; all sounds of joy and triumph had given way to tears and bitter lamentations. A messenger had arrived with early dawn, bringing the news that the young Count of Mons, the hero and the glory of his people, was taken captive.

Long and most bitterly did his young bride weep. But when the first bitterness was past, she consoled herself with the idea that it would be easy to ransom her husband by setting at liberty the twelve Norman generals. But, by and by, she heard to her dismay that Rollo would not consent to such an exchange; that, knowing well how dearly loved the young Count was, he would only surrender such

a prize when his country should be given up. And lastly, a messenger arrived with the news that Rollo threatened to cut off the head of his prisoner at once.

Then the young Countess seemed to lose her presence of mind and her courage. In the restlessness of her agony she flew out of the palace and out of the town, only imploring to be left alone. No one attempted to follow her.

Despair in her heart and madness in her brain, the wretched Albraide rushed into the open country, and in the direction of a deep lake which lay not far from the city. And now its cold, quiet waters lay before her, and her good angel must have trembled for her. Bewildered, miserable, tempted almost beyond her strength, she was already on the brink, and one moment more would have hurried her into eternity. But suddenly upon the borders of the lake rose up before her a venerable man in flowing antique robes and leaning on a pilgrim's staff. She turned away to avoid him; another, like him in appearance, again stood before her. Farther on, a third appeared, holding rays in his hand; a fourth, leaning on a Greek cross; twelve ancient men, marked by different emblems—a scythe, a sword, a palm, and a chalice, surrounded the lake, as if to guard it.

The Countess hurried round it again and again, without remarking that the old men were slowly following her; till, at the point where she had first seen the pilgrim with his staff, they all surrounded her, and with one solemn voice addressed her:

"Albraide, God in His mercy saves you from a fearful sin. A thought is in your heart which you have never offered up to Him; but we have not forgotten you, poor suffering child! Send back the twelve generals. Return to Mons; do all which the barbarian demands, and you will see your Regnier again."

A light streamed over the black waters as the vision disappeared, and in its radiance knelt Albraide—weeping bitterly, indeed, but now with soft and healthful tears. She could not doubt but her preservers from sin and death were no others than the twelve Apostles.

She quickly regained her palace, and summoned the twelve prisoners before her.

"You are free," she said; "return to your leader—and may he deal by Regnier as I have dealt by you."

The twelve generals looked one upon the other in surprise. Free from their chains, they returned to their camp, blessing and praising the generous Countess.

The people of Mons, however, had already sent to negotiate with Rollo for the liberation of their Prince. The barbarian had demanded as ransom, not only the liberty of his twelve generals, but also all the gold and silver in Hainault, and that Albraide should swear by her God that neither jewels nor costly ornaments of any kind remained in her castles or in her churches. He also demanded a contribution in kind for the maintenance of his troops. Twenty-four hours were given to the people of Mons, and if by that time the ransom was not paid they might expect, said Rollo, to receive the head of their Count.

Rollo had not recovered from his surprise at the return of his generals when the first wagon containing the gold and silver arrived. The spoils of every palace, church, or castle, followed from hour to hour, and last of all arrived the jewels of the young Countess.

Surprised and touched through all his rugged nature, Rollo summoned Regnier to his presence, fell upon his neck, presented him with a horse, and insisted on himself accompanying him home to his wife, to whom he restored all her treasures.

"Duc Regnier," he said, "between you and me there must be perpetual peace and an eternal friendship."

Pressing his hand, he swore to respect for his sake Hainault and Brabant, set sail for the open sea, and hastened off to conquer that part of France which has since been named Normandy.

In memory of the Countess' vision, the lake where she had seen the twelve venerable men has ever since been named the Lake of the Apostles.

THE JEWISH CHILD SAVED IN THE FIRE.

In the year 527 there was at Bourges a school much frequented both by rich and poor, and even by the children both of Christians and Jews, without any distinction either of rank or of religion.

Now it happened that a Jewish artisan had a little son of twelve years old, who daily went with other children to this school. He was a favorite with his companions, despite his despised religion, and after school he was in the habit of lingering in the cool evening hours to enjoy a game of play with them in the streets. Often he saw them enter the church and kneel before a much-revered statue of Our Lady; there they would offer flowers, or, with the ready and playful devotion which characterizes the Catholic child, they would

run to Our Blessed Lady as to a mother, and beg her blessing on their work or play, or render their simple acts of thanksgiving for a well-learnt lesson or a successful game. The little Jew did as they did, and often prayed as fervently as any of them to her whom he did not yet know, but whom he had so often heard spoken of as the Mother of God. At the feast of Easter, which was celebrated with great pomp and joy, many children approached the holy altar to partake of the Bread of Life. They were easily to be recognized from the rest, as they entered the church in their spotless garments, with heads bowed down, and quiet and joy beaming on each innocent and earnest face. The little Jew felt a thrill of envy—envy such as a saint might have felt, and asked himself with tears in his eyes why he should not join them? Surely the Son of that beautiful Lady whom he loved so much, that sweet Lady to whom he had so often offered flowers, would not shut him out from this happy troop. And he joined himself to them. The priest did not know him, and he received the Holy Eucharist among the rest. It was innocently done, and perhaps few thanksgivings were more fervent or more deeply felt than that of the ignorant little Jew. The Mass ended, and after a visit to his well-known and dearly loved statue, the little one returned home. The child's frequent absences of late had passed unobserved by his father, a busy, silent man, who took little heed of his son's doings; but on this occasion he had been away an unusually long time, and his father broke silence at last, to ask where he had been. The child told him at once how dearly he loved Our Lady's statue; how often he had visited it; and how that day he had at last received the Christian's food, the Bread of Angels, as he had been taught to call it. His father was one of those men who combine utter carelessness in the practice of all that regards their own creed with a bitter and persecuting hatred of any other. That his son should have neglected any religion, that he should have grown up an unbeliever or a bad man, would have troubled him little; but that he should have become a Christian, this was an offence which awakened every evil feeling of his dark and gloomy nature; that his child should ever have set foot in the place of worship of those detested Christians was a blot on his name never to be washed out. He flew upon the helpless boy with the fury of a demon, seized him, and hurled him with a volley of curses into the blazing furnace which he was then tending, throwing two enormous fagots after him to make his fate sure. It was over in a moment, and soon after the boy's mother entered. She had seen her child returning, and followed

him as quickly as she could; and now she was much astonished at not seeing him here.

"Where is the child?" she asked, but her husband made no answer; and the poor woman, now beginning to feel a vague terror, ran into every corner of her own house and those of her neighbors, calling on her boy, at first with anxiety, then with wild terror. At last she fancied that, in answer to her frenzied cries, she heard his voice; she called again, and again the voice replied. The neighbors who had gathered round her stood aghast with terror—the voice seemed to come from the furnace; and the horror and astonishment were at their height, when the boy's father, who had maintained a sullen demeanor during the whole time, was seen, with an expression of rage, to seize a fagot, which he attempted to fling into the furnace. Some of the neighbors held him back, others hastened to extinguish the blazing charcoal and wood, and at last, to the bewilderment and astonishment of all, the boy was drawn out uninjured. Not a thread of his dress, not a hair of his head, was singed, and his little cheeks were as cool and rosy as if he came from a bath, rather than a furnace heated to its greatest extent. When the first burst of horror, joy, and gratitude, with their mingled smiles and sighs, was over, the child gave his own simple history. "It was the kind lady of the church," he said, "who had received him in her arms and protected him from the flames in the folds of her white mantle." The fate of the wretched father is unknown; but the mother and her child became Christians.

Such was the history of the little Jew. May we take example by his simple faith; and may Mary, the Mother of Mercy, wrap us in the spotless folds of her mantle from a more cruel enemy and a yet more fiery furnace.

THE CHILDREN'S DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF GALLORO.

Of all the retreats scattered up and down along the sides of the Alban and Sabine hills, in which the Romans and their guests seek shelter from the summer heats, there is none more peaceful and more pleasant than the little village of L'Ariccia. Prettily situated on the summit of one of those knolls, or minor eminences, which form the outskirts of the Alban range where first it begins to rise out of the Campagna, it still retains those ancient characteristics by which it is known to the classical student. As your carriage toils

slowly up the steep ascent by which the village is entered from the side of Rome, it is beset by troops of beggars, imploring the same assistance, and using (in many instances) the very same outward gesture as their forefathers did in the days of Juvenal;* when you have reached the top, and penetrated nearly to the end of the one long, narrow street of which the village consists, you come to a very unpretending but very comfortable little hotel, which might serve as the genuine representative of that "*hospitium modicum*" wherein Horace † took his first night's rest in his celebrated journey from Rome to Brindisi; and if you go on but a few paces farther, and pass under the archway at the other extremity of the village, you find yourself at once in that thick, dark wood, that *Nemus Aricinum*, through which many an ancient worshipper of Jupiter Latialis must often have passed on his way to or from the solemn assemblies that were wont to be held on the summit of Monte Cavi.

It was in the early spring of the year 1621, that a boy, named Santi Bevilacqua, a native of Tuscany, but then living with his uncle at L'Ariccia, was out in this wood on some boyish quest after wild fruits or flowers; and in the course of his rambles, he chanced to spy what seemed to him to be a piece of high wall or broken rock, thickly surrounded with brambles and all sorts of underwood. Impelled by an idle curiosity, or by some other motive of which we have no account, he peered more closely into this dense mass of wild, tangled vegetation, until he fancied that he saw against the face of the rock something shining and colored. Having removed, as well as he was able, all the impediments in his way, he discovered, to his great delight, that there was a picture there of Our Blessed Lady, holding the Divine Infant in her arms, for which, with the true instinct of a Catholic child, he immediately conceived a very lively devotion, and, falling on his knees, spent a considerable time in prayer and meditation before it. For some time the boy took a great pride in keeping his discovery a profound secret from all his companions, and every day, as he left school, he used to steal away as secretly as he could, and pay a solitary visit to his dear Madonna. He had no other means of finding his way to the spot than by faithfully following the course he had chanced to pursue on the day of the original discovery; yet this, he was well aware, was needlessly long and circuitous. He set about, therefore, to make a more direct path for himself, but, as this proved to be a task beyond his strength, he was obliged to call to his assistance some of his older school-fellows. These went

* Sat. iv. 11–78. † 1 Sat. v. 2.

to work with admirable diligence, and managed to force a passage through a great deal of brushwood, until they had nearly arrived at the object of their desires. But here the wood grew thicker and more stout, and no force which this band of juvenile workmen could command would make any impression upon it. Day after day they renewed their attempts, but always failed. At last one of them suggested a brilliant idea, which, with the characteristic thoughtlessness of their age, they immediately proceeded to carry into execution. It was no other than to set fire to the obnoxious impediments, and, wonderful to relate, they succeeded in their purpose without doing any mischief to other parts of the wood. When once this feat had been accomplished, the picture of Our Lady in the wood became a favorite resort of all the children who were aware of its existence; they made daily pilgrimages to it, offering their little nosegays of wild flowers or anything else they could get, by way of ornament; and although some of the good villagers of L'Ariccia did not quite approve of such a troop of children continually passing to and fro in what they conceived to be very dangerous proximity to their vineyards and gardens, yet the pious practice could not be checked, but only grew more and more general.

It was in the designs of Divine Providence, however, that this picture should receive a still greater celebrity, and become an object of devotion to a more extensive circle; and the child Santi was selected to be the occasion of this, as he had also been of its first discovery. One day, being somewhat weary on his return from the wood, he lay down in his uncle's shop, leaning his head against a heap of boards which were ranged along the wall. During his sleep, all these planks fell, and of course the child was buried under them. The carpenter, hearing the noise, ran to the spot to see what was the matter; other neighbors also were soon gathered together to the scene of the accident. At first they lamented over the child as dead, but, on hearing his voice calling from beneath the timber, they lost no time in removing it, and, to their great amazement, they found the boy not only alive, but absolutely unhurt. Nothing was now to be heard but cries on all sides of "*Miracolo! miracolo! Madre di Dio! Maria santissima!*" and other such exclamations; and the boy was called upon to give an account of his extraordinary escape. This was soon done, for all that he could say about it was that as soon as he felt the planks were moving he instantly invoked the Madonna of Vallericcia, and that he had never ceased to do so ever since. This led, of course, to a rehearsal of the whole story *ab ovo*. of the

way in which the picture had first been brought to light, and how the juvenile pilgrims had been constantly honoring it ever since; whereupon the older inhabitants of the village called to mind that in their younger days they had often heard talk of this picture. They could not, indeed, give any accurate account of who it was that had painted it, nor how old it was, but it was generally supposed that it was the work of one of the Basilian monks of Grotto Ferrata, who had once owned some property in that neighborhood, and whose zeal for religious painting was so notorious. Anyhow, they could remember when there had been a great devotion to this Madonna; even as late as the year 1594, the Princess Artemisia Savelli (whose family then occupied the palace and lands in L'Ariccia now belonging to the Chigi family) had attributed her own unexpected recovery from some dangerous malady to a vow which she made with reference to this very picture; and she had afterward been very anxious to build a little chapel for it, only unfortunately there was some dispute between the Prince and the ecclesiastical authorities of the village as to the right of property in this portion of the wood; hence the whole scheme had fallen to the ground, and the public devotion received a check, which ended, as we have seen, in the total neglect of the picture, and, indeed, absolute forgetfulness of its existence. Now, however, news of the miracle being everywhere noised abroad, people naturally flocked together to go and visit the place; and since it only needs for a Catholic to show special devotion to Our Blessed Lady in order to receive special benefits from her intercession, it follows, as a matter of course, that other wonderful cures and other favors, both temporal and spiritual, were soon received at the same spot.

The *grazia*, then, that had been received by the boy Bevilacqua, was followed by innumerable others of various kinds, bestowed upon persons who came to offer up their prayers and to call upon Our Blessed Lady for help, in the presence of this ancient picture, until at length one of the priests of L'Ariccia, by name Polidori, a native of Frascati, determined on erecting an altar there and enclosing it in a little oratory. He also built a cottage adjoining, as a residence for some one to take care of the sanctuary; and in addition to this person, Santi also went and lived there, to serve the Masses and perform all the other offices of a sacristan. The chapel was opened on the 3d of May, 1623, the whole population of the neighborhood assisting at a grand procession, and it was soon so much frequented that fourteen or fifteen Masses were said there nearly every day

Offerings, too, of various kinds were given in such abundance that it was proposed to erect a church of greater pretensions, capable of accommodating the continually increasing number of pilgrims. The Cardinal Bishop of Albano and Prince Savelli having consented to this proposal, and upward of forty thousand dollars having been contributed for the purpose, the foundation-stone was laid on the 15th of August, 1624, on a little platform of land which almost overhangs the site of the more humble oratory and the place where the picture was first discovered. It was several years before the building was completed, more especially since it was determined to erect a convent also, adjoining the new church; and the funds which had been collected proved inadequate to this extension of the original plan. At length, however, the whole work was accomplished, and on the 15th of May, 1633, the church was solemnly dedicated to Our Blessed Lady, under the title of her Immaculate Conception, and at the same time religious of the congregation of Vallambrosa took possession of the new monastery. Early on the following day (which in that year was Whit-Monday) upward of thirty thousand persons might be seen flocking together from all the neighboring villages, and even from Rome itself, anxious to assist at the ceremony of removing the picture from its original position in the wood to the place that was now prepared for it over the high altar in the church. Canon Polidori's little oratory had merely enclosed the rock on whose surface the image of Our Lady was painted, he had not attempted to detach the painting from the rock itself, and, indeed, this would have been impossible, the coat of plaster on which it stood being too thin and delicate to bear removal. But now they had sawn off that portion of the rock which they wished to preserve, and, this fragment being placed on a wooden frame, highly ornamented with flowers and lights, and otherwise prepared for the purpose, they proceeded to carry it up the hill, and to deposit it in its new resting-place. This was done by bodies of ten men at a time, continually relieving one another, and moving onward amid the solemn prayers and hymns and psalms of thanksgiving of the assembled multitudes. Many miracles, it is said, were wrought both during its progress and after it was placed in the church, where it was exposed to the veneration of the faithful on a platform near the high altar until the end of the month; and similar blessings have been renewed from time to time ever since, of which the inhabitants of L'Ariccia retain a most grateful remembrance.

The plague in 1656 and the cholera in 1837 had spread far and

wide through central Italy and the States of the Church; it had even reached as far as the little town of Albano, scarcely half a mile distant from the village of which we are speaking; but the faithful inhabitants flocked together to pay their vows at the shrine of Galloro. Old men and children, young men and maidens, princes, priests, and beggars--all might then be seen wending their way through the shady wood to the little chapel, which was crowded from morning till night; the petitioners told their beads as they went along, or they recited psalms, or they sang hymns and litanies, and many of them walked barefooted. In a word, they were pilgrims and humble clients of Mary; and Mary received their prayers, the plague was stayed, and not a single inhabitant of the village fell a victim on either occasion.

Equally remarkable was the deliverance of this village, not, indeed, from all molestation and alarm, yet from all plunder and violence on the part of the republican troops of France at the close of the last century. The sanctuary itself had been sacrilegiously stripped of all that was costly and valuable in the way of precious stones or metals; the religious had been driven from their home, and the monastery, with all its furniture, was sold. The church, therefore, was necessarily closed, and all public devotion to the picture suspended. Yet, day after day, many a peasant might be seen kneeling on the bare ground without the door, invoking the assistance and protection of their ancient patron; and by and by the picture itself was removed to L'Ariccia, and even the altar which had stood below it, and after this translation the inhabitants both felt and found themselves safe from the lawless depredations of their enemies.

A combination of circumstances, such as the world calls chance, but in which religion never fails to recognize the finger of God, served to protect them from all those further injuries by which their less favored neighbors were so grievously oppressed. Their grateful devotion for this mercy rendered them extremely unwilling to restore the picture to Galloro when the Vallambrosian monks returned to take possession of the monastery; indeed, the religious were obliged to call for the interference of the Pope before they could recover it. Ten years afterward saw Napoleon master of Rome, and all the religious communities dispersed. Galloro, however, was not this time altogether abandoned. Although the Vallambrosians were obliged to withdraw, they left two American priests—ex-Jesuits, who had been staying with them for some time since the dissolution of their

own Society—to serve the church during their absence; and when, on the restoration of Pope Pius VII. to his throne, and of the various religious orders to their homes, the Vallambrosians, in consequence of an insufficiency of numbers, were no longer in a condition to resume their residence here, the Holy Father, who had just then re-established the Society of Jesus, appointed these fathers in their stead, and they have retained it ever since.

Only three or four Jesuits are in constant residence here; its healthy situation, however, and the quiet retirement of the place, cause it to be constantly visited by fathers from other parts who have been overworked and stand in need of rest; hence the functions in the church are frequent and good, and the devotion to the sanctuary is probably as great at the present day as it has ever been, excepting perhaps on certain special occasions immediately after some notorious miracle. We have already said that the church stands on the side of a hill, without any habitations nearer to it than the villages of L'Ariccia on the one side, and of Genazzano on the other (the former being a little more than half a mile off, perhaps, the latter at more than double that distance); yet the number of communions that were made there in a single year were upward of seven thousand and sixty, being an average of nearly twenty pilgrims a day. There can be no doubt but that the Romans and foreigners who make their summer retreat in the neighborhood contribute something to this number; we observe, however, that in the very depth of winter the average number of communions is not less than five hundred a month. Thus, in December, five hundred and twelve; in January, four hundred and sixty-four; in February, six hundred and thirty-three, etc. These details may enable the reader in some degree to realize to himself the habit which prevails among the people, of having recourse to this shrine on all occasions of special devotion during the time of any public or private trial; in a word, when they wish to be more earnest in their prayers, and to draw nearer, as it were, to the throne of grace and the fount of mercy.

ST. STANISLAS KOSTKA, THE PATRON OF YOUTH.

YOUTH is the amiable bloom of age, in which sanctity has particular advantages and charms; a circumstance which recommends to our admiration this saint, who in his tender years surpassed the most advanced in the gifts of grace and virtue. Stanislas was the young-

ST. STANISLAS.

TO SAINT STANISLAS

PRAYERS

MY most pure patron, St. Stanislas, angel of purity, I rejoice with thee for that marvellous gift of virginal purity which graced thy spotless heart; I humbly pray thee, obtain for me strength against all impure temptations, and inspire me with constant watchfulness to guard the virtue of holy purity.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

My most loving patron, St. Stanislas, seraph of charity, I rejoice with thee for the burning flame of love which ever kept thy pure and innocent heart elevated to God and united with Him; I humbly pray thee kindle in me a flame of the love of God, so burning as to consume all earthly love, and set me on fire with His love alone.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

My most tender and most mighty patron, St. Stanislas, angel of purity and seraph of charity, I rejoice with thee for thy most happy death, a death occasioned by the ardor of thy desire to contemplate Mary assumed into heaven, and caused at last by love for her. I give thanks to Mary because she willed to accomplish thy desires; and I pray thee, gracious saint, by the merit of thy happy death, be thou my advocate, my patron in my death. Oh, intercede with Mary for me, to obtain for me a death, if not so happy as thine, at least calm and peaceful, under the safe conduct of Mary, my advocate, and of thee, my special patron.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

His Holiness, Pope Pius IX., by an autograph rescript, March 27th, 1847, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say these three prayers, with the *Our Father, Hail Mary,* and the *Glory be to the Father,* each three times:

AN INDULGENCE OF THREE HUNDRED DAYS, once a day.

By decree of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, July 10th, 1854, he granted likewise:

A PLENARY INDULGENCE, once a month, to all those who have said these three prayers, with the *Our Father, Hail Mary,* and the *Glory be to the Father,* each three times, once a day for a month, on the day when, being truly penitent, after confession and communion, they shall visit a church or public oratory, and pray for some time for the intention of His Holiness.—*Raccolta, pp. 372–374.*

est son of John Kostka, senator of Poland, and of Margaret Kriska, sister to the Palatine of Masovia, and was born in the castle of Rostkau, on the 28th of October, in 1550. His mother engraved on his tender heart early and deep impressions of piety, and the first use the saint made of his reason was to consecrate himself to God with a fervor beyond his age. The first elements of letters he learned at home under a private tutor named John Bilinski, who attended him and his elder brother, Paul, to the numerous college of the Jesuits at Vienna, when the saint was fourteen years old. From the first dawn of reason he showed no inclination to anything but to piety; and, as soon as he was capable, he gave as much of his time as possible to prayer and study. His nicety in the point of purity, and his dread of detraction and all dangers of sin, made him infinitely cautious in the choice of his company. When he arrived at Vienna, and was lodged among the pensioners of the Jesuits, every one was struck with admiration to see the profound recollection and devotion with which he poured forth his soul before God in prayer; the modesty and glowing fervor which appeared in his countenance at those times raised in all who beheld him a veneration for his person. He sometimes fell into raptures, and often even at public prayer torrents of sweet tears gushed from his eyes with such impetuosity that he was not able to contain them. He always came from his devotions so full of the Spirit of God that he communicated the same to those who conversed with him. The fire of divine love which burned in his breast he kindled in the hearts of several devout companions, with whom it was his delight to discourse on God and heavenly things, on which subjects he spoke with such energy as imparted to others some sparks of that joy with which his heart and words overflowed.

His innocence and virtue stood yet in need of being perfected by trials. Upon the death of the Emperor Ferdinand, in 1564, his successor, Maximilian II., who had not the same zeal for religion, took from the Jesuits the house which Ferdinand had lent them for the lodging of their pensioners. Paul Kostka, who was two years older than the saint, and who had their tutor Bilinski always in his interest, was fond of liberty and diversions, and to indulge this inclination prevailed with Bilinski to take lodgings in a Lutheran's house; and, looking upon his brother's conduct as a censure of his own, treated him continually with injuries, and often struck and beat him. Bilinski was still a more dangerous tempter and persecutor, not only by declaring always for the elder brother against him, but always by

endeavoring to persuade him, by flattering insinuations and severe rebukes, that he ought to allow more to the world, and that so much was not necessary for a person in his station to save his soul. Stanislas, far from being overcome, stood the more firmly upon his guard, and opposed these assaults by redoubling his fervor. He communicated every Sunday and great holiday, and always fasted the day before his communion; never went to school, morning or afternoon, without first going to church to salute the Blessed Sacrament; heard every day two Masses and made his meditation, slept little, and always rose at midnight to pray; he often wore a hair shirt, frequently took the discipline, never made his appearance in company only at table, and instantly rose up and left it if any unbecoming word was let fall by any one in his presence. When he was not at church or college, he was always to be found at his devotions, or studies in his closet, except for a short time after meals. By this conduct he deserved to be interiorly enlightened and strengthened by the Holy Ghost, who, by his inspirations, showed him how opposite the false maxims of worldly prudence are to those of the Gospel; that it is an error to pretend to salvation by following them, and that what is usually called learning the world is properly learning its spirit and maxims, which is to forget those of Jesus Christ.

The saint suffered these dangerous solicitations and persecutions for two years, and then fell very ill. Finding his distemper dangerous, he desired to receive the viaticum; but his Lutheran landlord would not suffer it to be brought publicly to his house, and the tutor and brother would have it deferred. The pious youth, in extreme affliction, recommended himself to the intercession of St. Barbara, who is particularly invoked in the northern kingdoms, for the grace of a happy death and the benefit of receiving the last sacraments. His prayer was heard, and he seemed in a vision to be communi cated by two angels. The Blessed Virgin, in another vision, told him that the hour of his death was not yet come, and bade him devote himself to God in the Society of Jesus. He had then for about a year entertained thoughts of embracing that state, and after his recovery petitioned the superiors to be admitted. Father Magius, Provincial of that part of Germany, who happened then to be at Vienna, dared not receive him, for fear of incurring the indignation of his father, who warmly declared he never would consent that his son should become a religious man. Cardinal Commedon, Legate of Pope Pius V. at Vienna, whom the saint desired to recommend him to the Provincial, dared not undertake to do it. Stanislas, therefore,

having discovered his resolution to his confessor, and by a tender and edifying letter laid in his room left notice of his design to his tutor and brother, stole away privately to Augsburg, and thence went to Dillingen, to make the same request to the pious Father Canisius, Provincial of Upper Germany. Father Canisius, to try his vocation, ordered him to wait on the pensioners of the college at table and cleanse out their rooms, which the saint did with such extraordinary affection and humility that the students were exceedingly astonished at his meekness, charity, devotion, and spirit of mortification, though he was utterly unknown to them. Father Canisius, after having kept him three weeks, sent him to Rome, where the saint threw himself at the feet of St. Francis Borgia, then General of the Society, and earnestly renewed his petition. St. Francis received him with great joy. Stanislas had no desire to see the curiosities of Rome, but without further delay entered upon a retreat under the master of novices, during the whole course of which he was favored with the sweetest consolations of the Holy Ghost and extraordinary heavenly communications. He took the habit on SS. Simon and Jude's day, in 1567, and a few days after received from his father a most passionate letter, with threats that he would procure the banishment of the Jesuits out of Poland, and would make them feel the weight of his indignation for having concurred to such a dishonor of his family. Stanislas answered it in the most modest and dutiful manner, but expressed a firm purpose of serving God according to his vocation, and, without the least disturbance or trouble of mind, applied himself to his religious duties, calmly recommending all things to God.

It was the saint's utmost study and endeavor to regulate and sanctify, in the most perfect manner, all his ordinary actions in every circumstance, particularly by the most pure and fervent intention of fulfilling the will of God, and by the greatest exactitude in every point of duty. Christianity teaches us that we are not to listen to the prudence of the flesh, which is death to the soul. Stanislas, therefore, set no bounds to his mortifications but what obedience to his director prescribed him. In the practice of obedience to his superiors such was his exactitude that, as he was one day carrying wood with a fellow-novice, he would not help the other in taking up a load upon his shoulders till he had made it less, because it was larger than the brother who superintended the work had directed, though the other had taken no notice of such an order. His own faults he always exaggerated with unfeigned simplicity, so as to set them in a light in which only humility, which makes a person most

severe in condemning himself, could have represented them Whence others said of him that he was his own grievous calumniator. As pride feels a pleasure in public actions, so his greatest delight was secrecy, or some humbling circumstance whenever he made his appearance in public; as a more than ordinary threadbare habit, by which he might seem to strangers to be a person of no consideration in the house, as he looked upon himself and desired to be regarded by others. Nothing gave him so much confusion and displeasure as to hear himself commended, and he was ingenious in preventing all occasions of it and in shunning everything by which he might appear to others humble. The whole life of this fervent novice seemed almost a continual prayer; nor was his prayer almost any other than an uninterrupted exercise of the most tender love of God, which often vented itself in torrents of sweet tears, or in holy transports or raptures. By the habitual union of his heart with God he seemed, in the opinion of his directors, never to be molested with distractions at his prayers. Several, by having recommended themselves with confidence to his good thoughts, have suddenly found themselves comforted, and freed from bitter anguish of soul and interior trouble of mind. The ardent love which the saint had for Jesus Christ in the Holy Sacrament was so sensible that his face appeared all on fire as soon as he entered the church. He was often seen in a kind of ecstasy at Mass, and always after receiving the Holy Communion. The whole day on which he communicated he could not, without great difficulty and reluctance, speak of anything but the excess of the love which Jesus Christ has expressed for us in that adorable Sacrament; and of this he discoursed with such interior feeling and joy, and in so pathetic a manner, that the most experienced and spiritual fathers took great delight in conversing with him.

This holy seraph, glowing with divine love, was inflamed with an uncommon ardor to be speedily united to the object of his love a considerable time before his happy death, which he distinctly foretold to several. In the beginning of August he said to several together that all men are bound to watch, because they may die any day, but that this lesson particularly regarded him, because he should certainly die before the end of that month. Four days after, discoursing with Father Emmanuel Sa, concerning the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, he said, in a kind of transport of devotion: "O father, how happy a day to all the saints was that on which the Blessed Virgin was received into heaven! I doubt not but they all celebrate the

anniversary of it with extraordinary joy, as we do on earth. I hope myself to see the next feast they will keep of it." His youth, and the perfect health which he then enjoyed, made others give no credit to this prediction. Yet they perceived that he made all immediate preparation for the great journey of eternity. On St. Laurence's day, in the evening, he found himself indisposed; upon which he could not contain his joy that the end of his mortal pilgrimage drew near. Being carried to the infirmary, he made the sign of the cross upon his bed, saying he should never more rise out of it. His fever proved at first only intermitting; yet he repeated the same assurances. On the 14th day of the month he said, in the morning, that he should die the night following; a little after midday he fell into a swoon, which was followed with a cold sweat, and he demanded and received the viaticum and extreme unction with the most tender devotion, during which, according to his desire, he was laid upon a blanket on the floor. He begged pardon of all his brethren for whatever offences he had committed against any one, and continued repeating frequent aspirations of compunction and divine love. Some time after he said that he saw the Blessed Virgin accompanied with many angels, and happily expired a little after three o'clock in the morning of the 15th of August, in 1568, having completed only nine months and eighteen days of his novitiate, and of his age seventeen years, nine months, and eighteen days. The sanctity of his life and several manifest miracles engaged Clement VIII. to beatify him—that is, declare him happy—in 1604. Paul V. allowed an office to be said in his honor, in all the churches of Poland; Clement X. granted that privilege to the Society, and settled his feast on the 13th of November, on which his body, which was found sound and without the least signs of decay or corruption, was translated from the old chapel and laid in the new Church of the Novitiate at Rome, founded by Prince Pamphili. The saint was canonized by Benedict XIII. in 1727. The Poles have chosen him, jointly with St. Casimir, chief patron of their kingdom, and he is particular patron of the cities of Warsaw, Posna, Lubin, and Leopold. The Poles ascribe to his intercession the deliverance of their country from a pestilence, and several victories of King Ladislas over the Turks, and others of his brother and successor, Casimir, over the Tartars and Cossacks, in 1651. Many miraculous cures have been wrought through his intervention. A relation of this that follows, with the attestations of five eminent physicians and a surgeon, and of all the Jesuits then living at Lima, and witnesses to the fact, approved by the vicariat (the

archbishopric being then vacant), was printed at Madrid, in 1674. A novice in the convent of the Jesuits at Lima, after a malignant fever, in the month of October, was deprived by a palsy of all motion on the whole right side of his body, so that he was not able to stir in the least that hand or foot. A loathing of all food, with a fever and other bad symptoms, attended the disorder, which the physicians judged incurable. On the feast of St. Stanislas, the 13th of November, by applying a picture of the saint to that side, he found the motion and feeling in those parts instantly restored, and found himself in perfect health. Certain companions who were present called the rector, and the whole house followed him. The novice who was recovered arose and dressed himself, and walked to the church as well as if he had never been sick. The whole community accompanied him, and sung a solemn Te Deum.

THE CHILD MARTYRS OF THE JUSTINIANI.

In glancing over the pages of any history, it is curious to remark how capriciously the associations of historical interest seem to change localities. At one time some particular country is chosen out, and into its limits are crowded all the life and greatness of the period; and if we look at it at another time, perhaps in the very next age, we find it forgotten; the light that rested over it for a moment has passed on, and is illuminating some other spot, leaving it again, in its turn, to fall into its former insignificance. All the classic regions of antiquity may be said to be illustrations of this remark, and none more so than the Isles of Greece; their interest in the map of Europe at the present day is limited to their names. Yet not to speak only of times of distant antiquity, scarcely more than three hundred years ago these islands played a distinguished part in the long struggle maintained by Christian Europe against the power of the infidels. During the whole of the sixteenth century (until, under the patronage of Mary the Help of Christians, their naval power was utterly destroyed at Lepanto) we find Europe lying almost at their mercy. Among the many tales which may be found of touching interest in connection with their cruel incursions on the shores of the Mediterranean and Levant, the following is told concerning the illustrious family of the Justiniani.

The original stock of this noble house was settled at Venice; but a branch had long been fixed in the Isle of Scio, of which island they were indeed the lords, though in the beginning of the sixteenth cen-

tury they had become tributary to the Turks. A noble devotedness in resistance to the infidel, and in the protection of Christendom, was hereditary among them. In every account of the armament sent by Venice against the forces of the Turks, we may be almost sure to find a prince of the Justiniani family at their head, or dying gallantly in the struggle. There was also another hereditary feeling among them, and this was their attachment to the Order of St. Dominic. They have given no less than nine bishops to the Order, one of whom (Vincent Justiniani) was Master-General during the pontificate of St. Pius V.

At the time of the circumstances we are about to relate, Timothy Justiniani, a member of the same illustrious Order, was bishop of his native island of Scio, and his cousin Antony, also a Dominican, archbishop of the neighboring island of Naxia. It was the year 1566; the Council of Trent was just over, and the Bishop of Scio, who had assisted at its deliberations, had returned to his diocese. There had been a short lull in the fierce desultory warfare which had been carried on for many years with the Turks. The inhabitants paid their tribute to the infidels regularly and exactly, and a treaty had been solemnly granted them, by which peace and quiet seemed to be assured to them in return for this pledge of their submission.

The Scian islanders, therefore, laid aside the fear of a descent of the infidels, which was the perpetual bugbear, if we may so say, of those days, and prepared to celebrate the festival of Easter with unusual joy and solemnity. Everything this year contributed to make this peculiarly a holiday of rejoicing. The return of their bishop after his long labors at the Council, and the termination of the Council itself, settling and confirming as it had done the faith of the Church, and fixing the adamant barriers of its definitions against the distractions and heresies of the time, gave a special gladness to the feelings with which all flocked to the churches on the 14th of April (on which day the Paschal festival fell that year). It was the moment chosen by the Turks to come upon them with a powerful fleet, which, landing its forces before the Scians were aware of its approach, took them utterly by surprise; so that the entire island fell into their hands almost without resistance. The Bishop was in the cathedral engaged in the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, when a large body of the infidels entered the church. In their hatred to the Christian faith, they made every kind of profanation and sacrilege one of the express objects of their depredatory attacks. Justiniani, therefore, well knew what would follow; and, turning from the altar

to meet his enemies, he used every entreaty, and offered the riches of the entire island, if only he might be suffered to preserve the holy sanctuaries unprofaned. Their answer was a rush toward the altar, headed by their chief, Pasha Piali. This man, rudely pushing aside the Bishop, laid his hands on the ciborium, and cried contemptuously, "Is this the God of the Christians?" "It is Himself," replied the Bishop; "I will never deny Him;" and perhaps he hoped this answer might strike some awe into the minds of the Turks. But Piali with a sneer cast the vessel to the ground, and would have trampled on its contents, if the Bishop had not thrown himself in the way. "Strike me to death, if you will," he exclaimed; "the Sacred Mysteries shall never be trampled under your feet;" and so saying, resisting with extraordinary coolness and courage the attempts of all who stood round to prevent him, he on his knees carefully and reverently gathered together every one of the Sacred Hosts, even to the smallest particle.

Whether, indeed, his courage and devotion inspired them with some respect, we cannot say; but the infidels spared his life. Every church, however, throughout the island was destroyed, save that of the Dominican convent, which was turned into a mosque. The next care of the Turks was, if possible, to destroy the family whose enmity they had so much cause to dread. Every member of the Justiniani family was carefully sought for and taken captive. Some were carried to the Crimea, others to Constantinople and different parts of the empire. Their property was seized, and the few who escaped captivity took refuge in Italy in a state of absolute destitution. A few of them sent into banishment recovered their liberty, being ransomed through the interest of the Pope and the French king; but they never recovered their former power and distinction. Not one of these, however, but bore himself in this fall and ruin of his house with the spirit of a hero, and the Christian gallantry which they held as a birthright was nowhere more nobly displayed than in some young children, whose fate was peculiarly melancholy. With a refinement of cruelty, the Turks had chosen the youngest children of the family to the number of about twenty, and, separating them from their parents, carried them to Constantinople, where they were placed among the pages of the court of Solyman II. They doubtless hoped that at their tender age (for they were not above ten years old) it would be easy to make them forget the teaching of their fathers, and bring them up in the Mussulman religion; and they were well aware no agony and no humiliation could be greater to the

princes of the hated Justiniani than to know that their sons were living renegades to their faith. If this was their hope, they had little calculated the temper of those with whom they had to do. Neither the luxury of an eastern court nor the threats of cruel punishment could tempt one of these children to disgrace his faith as a Christian, or prove unworthy of the name of a Justiniani. The Turks for a while contented themselves with endeavoring to tempt them from their allegiance with the flattering seductions of the senses, but, finding all their efforts in vain, they savagely condemned them to be whipped to death. This torture was inflicted with unusual barbarity, for the infidels were piqued to see themselves defied and baffled by a little company of children. Not one gave way; in the midst of unspeakable torments they all showed the same constancy, and encouraged one another to suffer yet more for Jesus Christ. As one of these little martyrs was dying under the lash, a Turk who stood by approached, and bade him only lift his finger as a sign that he renounced Christianity, and he should be released. The noble child, unable to speak, confessed his faith by signs; for, raising the hand to which the Turk pointed as he spoke, he clenched the fingers together so tightly that no force was able to open them, and they remained firmly locked together even after his death. The Pasha himself came to the spot, and, addressing another, who had as yet survived the punishment, said he should be thrown from the top of a high tower if he still refused to embrace the faith of Mahomet. "I am not worthy to be a martyr for Jesus Christ like my brothers," replied the boy, "but all I desire in this world is to die for Him." On this he was shut up in prison, with the idea of wearying out his constancy. He knelt down on the floor, and, addressing himself to God in words of childish simplicity and confidence, prayed for constancy and courage to die in the faith. After spending three whole days in this manner, he died of his wounds and exhaustion.

St. Pius V. is said to have been touched with an extraordinary emotion of grief on hearing of these circumstances. As a Dominican, the Justiniani were like his religious brethren, and he gave the only testimony that lay in his power to do honor to these heroic children. In the Consistory held at St. Mark's in the September of the same year, he narrated the story of their martyrdom. Nor was their melancholy fate without its influence in the events which followed. The treacherous attack on Scio, with the revengeful ruin of this illustrious house, and, above all, the cruelty practised on their children, were felt to call for a severe chastisement; and when, five

years afterward, the Christian fleet lay opposite to the overwhelming armament of the infidels in the Gulf of Lepanto, many a heart was nerved to heroism by a thought of the devoted courage of the martyred children of the Justiniani.

ANNE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW AND HER PRAYERS.

In the year 1622, the Prince of Orange, Maurice of Nassau, determined on besieging Antwerp, reckoning on the secret intelligence which he maintained with the heretics inside the town, and relying also on the number of his soldiers and engines of war. With this design he embarked, together with twelve thousand men, eight thousand of whom were musketeers, and passing by Dordrecht took from thence twenty-four cannon and other pieces of artillery. Thirty-six long ships had been built on purpose for this expedition, and in these he placed two hundred and seventy horses and several instruments of war, such as had never before been known in the Dutch armies. As the fleet left Dordrecht, the wind was in their favor; Maurice had just held a review of his army, and at the sight of this formidable force, with the certainty, moreover, of meeting with none but a very feeble resistance, he cried out that he was sure of success; that he had nothing to fear from the power of man, and that God alone could hinder him.

Meanwhile, in the city thus threatened, there dwelt a certain holy nun, named Anne of St. Bartholomew, a Teresian Carmelite from Spain, who had been trained under St. Teresa herself in the Convent of St. Joseph of Avila, and had made such progress in the way of perfection that her holy superior said of her, "I have the name of a saint, but Anne does the works of one." It was in her arms that the saint died, and soon afterward she was called into France and chosen Superior of the Convent of Pontoise, and afterward of that of Paris; and in 1611, at the request of the Archduke Albert, she founded the convent of Carmelites in the city of Antwerp, and it was by her assistance that the first convent of English Teresian nuns was founded a few years later, on the 1st of May, 1619, in the very same city. On the very night when Maurice and his army embarked, as we have seen, at Dordrecht, this holy nun suddenly awoke, and called up her religious for prayer with such extreme earnestness that all thought she had received intimation of some treason, which she was imploring the assistance of God to defeat. She declared,

however, that it was not so; that she only knew that God was calling her inwardly to pray, and to cause them to pray also. At two o'clock in the morning her fervor redoubled; with her hands raised to heaven, she cried again and again for mercy, and that with such effort that her frame seemed to be sinking with fatigue. In the morning, she told one of the nuns that she was as weary as though her whole body had been bruised: "There must be some great treason on foot," she said, "for I feel as if I had been fighting all night. I have been forced to pray when I wished to rest, being quite exhausted; and when my arms, which I was holding stretched out toward God, dropped for very lassitude, I heard a voice within me, Pray on, pray on! If I had been fighting against a whole army, I could not have felt more utterly worn out."

Two hours after this, the effect of her prayer was known. Tidings then reached Antwerp that at the very moment when Anne had begun to pray the wind had changed, and that by the time the prince had reached a town called Gresboo a dreadful tempest had arisen; it had hailed with such violence as to cut to pieces or otherwise spoil the cordage of his vessels; and he himself, with a few gentlemen, had thrown themselves into a boat, and with difficulty escaped to Willemstad.

On another occasion, a few years later, when a night attack was unexpectedly made on the citadel of Antwerp, Anne was again awakened by a cry, which she found on inquiry had proceeded from no one in the house, and which she therefore regarded as a summons to prayer, feeling certain that the city must be in some danger. Her apprehensions were fully verified, for it soon became known that the enemy had attempted the citadel, but had suddenly withdrawn, leaving many of their guns and other instruments of war behind them.

So high an opinion of the efficacy of Anne's prayers was held among her contemporaries that the Infanta Isabel of Spain declared to Inigo Borgia, the governor of the citadel of Antwerp, that she had no fears for the safety of that fortress, nor of the town of Antwerp, so long as it should contain within its walls the Mother Anne of St. Bartholomew, "who," she said, "inspired her with more confidence than a numerous army."

PETRUCCIA AND OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL.

In the little town of Genazzano, a town pleasantly situated on the side of a range of hills skirting one of the high roads from Rome to Naples, there lived, not quite four hundred years ago, a very devout old woman, named Petruccia de Jeneo. She was a native of the place, and a member of the Third Order of St. Augustine, living in the world. She had had a little property of her own, but at the time of our narrative it was all spent, and spent, too, in a somewhat singular way. She had a great devotion to the principal church of the place, which was dedicated to Our Lady under the title of Mother of Good Counsel. It was but a small and poor building, and Petruccia determined to rebuild it on a scale of great magnificence. Her means were quite unequal to the task. Nevertheless, such as they were, she devoted them entirely to the work. She went and sold all that she had, and the undertaking was begun. Her friends and neighbors laughed her to scorn, as one who had begun to build without "having first set down and reckoned the charges that were necessary, whether she had wherewithal to finish it." Her relations—not without some suspicion of a selfish regard to their own interests as the motive of their interference—rebuked her sharply for her improvidence, in thus voluntarily depriving herself of those means of support with which God had blessed her, in the time of her greatest necessity. She was old and infirm, they said; and who would undertake the burden of her support, since her impoverishment had been the result of a foolish indulgence of her own fancy? Her answer to these objections was always the same: "The work will be finished, and that right soon, because it is not my work, but God's; Our Blessed Lady and St. Augustine will do it before I die;" and she continually repeated, with an air of exulting confidence, what seemed like the ravings of madness to those who heard her: "Oh, what a *gran signora*, what a noble lady, will soon come and take possession of this place!"

Meanwhile the work proceeded, and the walls had already risen to some height above the ground, close to the old church which they were intended to enclose. But by and by the builders ceased; Petruccia's funds were all spent, and there was no means of procuring any more. For the good woman had publicly declared that she had begun the undertaking, and was encouraged to persevere with it, mainly in reliance upon some secret inspiration, vision, or revelation

(it does not clearly appear which), that she believed herself to have received from God; whereas the Church, in order to guard against abuses which had sometimes arisen from giving heed to pretended supernatural messages of this kind, had issued a law forbidding such things to be attended to, unless they were corroborated by some other external and independent testimony; the mere assertion of a dream, a vision, or a revelation, was on no account to be obeyed. Petruccia's work, therefore, was not only suspended for want of means, it was also canonically prohibited; that is to say, her own substance had been entirely exhausted, and an appeal to the assistance of oth ers could not be sanctioned by the ecclesiastical authorities. Matters were in this state in the spring of 1467, when the following miraculous event at once justified and completed the whole undertaking.

From time immemorial, the feast of St. Mark the Evangelist had been celebrated in Genazzano as a very special holiday. Tradition records that this was the consequence of some decree of the holy Pontiff of that name, who lived in the middle of the fourth century, and who hoped thereby to abolish certain impure and superstitious practices by which the heathen had been wont to pollute that day. Anyhow the fact is certain, that the 25th of April was always the principal day of the great fair or market of the year in that town. Accordingly it was being celebrated in the usual manner in the year already mentioned; the town was full of strangers; crowds of persons had passed and repassed the old church, and the imperfect walls of the new. Some had jeered and mocked, saying, "This woman had begun to build, and was not able to finish;" but others were sorry to see so good a work unfinished. Evening was now fast approaching, the gayest, brightest hour of the fair, when, business being ended, the pleasure of the day began. All were devoting themselves to amusement, each in his own way, when suddenly some who stood on the public piazza, or square, in front of the church, saw something like a thin cloud floating in the air, and then settling on one of the walls of the unfinished building. Here the cloud seemed to divide and disappear, and there remained upon the wall a picture of Our Blessed Lady and the holy Child Jesus, which had not been there before—a picture which was new to all the bystanders, and which they could not in any way account for. At the same moment the bells of the church and of all the other churches in the town began to sound, yet no human hand could be seen to touch them. People ran from their houses to ask the cause of this general commotion, and indistinct rumors spread rapidly among them that some-

thing wonderful had happened in the Piazza della Madonna. Those who were nearest to the spot arrived just in time to see the aged Petruccia come out, like the rest, from the church to inquire what had happened. As soon as she saw the picture she threw herself on her knees, and saluted it with outstretched arms; then rising and turning round to the people, she told them, with a voice half-choked by the violence of her emotions of joy and gratitude, that this was the *gran signora* whom she had so long expected; that she was now come to take possession of the church that ought to have been ready for her, and that the bells were being rung in this miraculous way only to do her honor. At this intelligence the people fell upon their knees, and began to pour forth their prayers before this marvellous painting, which they knew not how otherwise to designate than as the *Madonna del Paradiso*, or Our Lady from Heaven.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the adjacent villages, alarmed by the unusual sound of the bells, accompanied, as is still the custom in many parts of Italy on all festive occasions, by the discharge of numerous firearms, imagined that some disturbance must have broken out in the city—no unlikely circumstance in those days of violence—and began to feel great anxiety for those of their relations and friends who were absent at the fair. Some, indeed, had already returned, but these were as much at a loss as the rest; for when they came away they had seen no symptoms of a riot, neither had they heard of any extraordinary cause of rejoicing. Others, again, had left the city, and were in the act of returning homeward, when their steps were arrested by these unaccountable sounds; and of these some, whose discretion was stronger than their curiosity, only hurried home the faster, while others turned back to investigate the cause. These, however, tarried so long to gaze at the wondrous sight, to hear its history, and to see the marvellous effects that followed, that the public anxiety of the neighborhood still remained unrelieved. At length, at a very late hour of the night, some few stragglers returned, and told so strange a tale that long before daybreak on the following morning multitudes of the country people might be seen taking advantage of the day of rest (it was the fourth Sunday after Easter), and hurrying toward the town to hear and see for themselves. And not only the hale and the active, but even the aged and infirm, the blind, the lame, the maimed, and many others, came or were brought to this new pool of Bethsaida; for it was part of the intelligence which reached them that persons were being miraculously healed of their infirmities in the presence of this strange picture.

And the faith of many of these simple-hearted pilgrims received the reward they looked for: the blind received their sight; the ears of the deaf were opened, and the tongue of the dumb was loosed; the lame walked; nay, in one or two instances, the very dead were restored to life again; and during the next two or three months we have authentic evidence of nearly two hundred miracles that were wrought on this favored spot.

But whence had this picture really come and how had it been brought? The people of Genazzano thought that it had come straight from heaven and had been brought by angels, as tradition says that the picture of Sta. Maria in Portico was once brought to St. Galla in Rome. So they called it, as we have seen, the Madonna del Paradiso, and were not a little annoyed when, a few days after its first appearance, two strangers arrived from Rome, and said that they knew the picture well and could tell all about its history. One of these strangers was a Sclavonian, the other an Albanian, and the story which they told was this:

They had been resident together in Scutari, a city of Albania, now called Iscodar, situated on the eastern coast of the Adriatic, and distant about five-and-twenty miles from the sea. On a little hill outside this city, not half a mile beyond the gates, there was a church in which this Madonna, painted upon the wall, was much venerated as the Madonna del Buon Officio. It was a picture to which there had always been a very great devotion, they said; but latterly, in the disturbed, miserable condition of the country, the inhabitants had been more than usually frequent in their visits to it, entreating the Madonna's interference to defend them from their dangerous enemies, the Turks, who, they had reason to apprehend, were meditating a fresh invasion, and who, as a matter of fact, did, not many years afterward, lay waste the whole country and destroy many cities with fire and sword. Numbers of the citizens had already fled from the impending calamity, and taken refuge, as contemporary historians tell us, some in Venice, others in different cities of Romagna. Among the rest, our two strangers at length determined to expatriate themselves like their neighbors; but before doing so, they went out to bid a last farewell to their favorite shrine, and to pray the Mother of God, that, as she with her divine Son had once been forced to flee from the face of one of the kings of the earth, who was plotting mischief against them, so she would mercifully vouchsafe to accompany, to guide, and protect these her humble clients in their no less compulsory flight. They said that, while they

were yet praying, the picture disappeared from their sight, and in its stead a white cloud seemed to detach itself from the wall, to float through the air, and to pass out through the doors of the church. Attracted by an impulse which they could not account for, yet were unable to resist, they rose from their knees and followed; presently, they found themselves caught up in some mysterious manner along with it, and carried forward in its company. The manner of their transit they could not explain; they only knew that, as the angel of the Lord once set Habacuc in Babylon over the lions' den where Daniel was imprisoned, "in the force of His Spirit," and then presently set him again in his own place in Judea;* and as, when Philip and the eunuch were come up out of the water, "the Spirit of the Lord took away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more: And he went on his way rejoicing, but Philip was found at Azotus;"† so they, too, had been miraculously transported through the air by some invisible hand from one place to another; first to the sea-coast; then across the Adriatic, whose waves had borne them up, as the Sea of Galilee had borne St. Peter when Jesus bade him come to Him upon the waters; then, that, as evening drew on, that which had seemed a pillar of a cloud by day became as it were a pillar of fire, and that finally, when they had been brought to the gates of Rome, it entirely disappeared.

At length, at the end of two or three days, they heard of a picture having appeared in a strange way at Genazzano, and that its appearance was followed by many miracles. Immediately they set out to visit it, and as soon as they had arrived they recognized and proclaimed its identity.

The people of Genazzano lent no willing ear to this strange history; it detracted somewhat from the heavenly origin which they would fain have assigned to their newly-gotten treasure, and it gave them some uneasiness, too, as to the ultimate security of their possession of it; for, should this story be authenticated, the picture might one day be reclaimed and carried away. In the course of a few days, however, as the story got noised abroad, other Albanians, who were scattered up and down in different parts of Italy, came to see it, and these, too, confirmed its identity. And many years afterward, when people who took an interest in the matter had the opportunity of going to Scutari and examining for themselves, they testified upon oath that they had found a blank space in the plaster of the walls of the church described; that its size and form corresponded exactly to

* Dan. xiv. 35–38. † Acts viii. 39.

that of the picture; and that the coloring and style of art exhibited in the picture were precisely the same with that which characterized all the other parts of the church. For it must be remembered that this was no painting executed upon board or canvas, and thus capable of easy removal, and leaving no trace behind it; it was a mere fresco upon a very thin coating of plaster, which no human skill could have detached from the wall in a single piece, still less have transported from one place to another without injury.

Of course it was impossible that so marvellous a story, circulated in the immediate neighborhood of the Holy See—for Genazzano is not more than thirty miles from Rome—should fail to attract the attention of that ever-watchful, jealous tribunal. The translation of the picture is said to have taken place late on the evening of the 25th of April; and before the middle of July, Pope Paul II. sent two bishops to examine, upon the very spot, into all the circumstances of the case. Cardinal Cortin, the Bishop of Palestrina, in whose diocese Genazzano is situated, was absent at this time at Avignon; the Pope therefore appointed a friend of his in his stead, Monsignor Gaucer, Bishop of Gap in Dauphiny; and with him he associated Monsignor Nicolo de Cruci, Bishop of Lesina, one of the islands in the Adriatic, near the coast of Dalmatia, whose familiarity as well with the language of the strangers as with the localities from which they professed to have come could not fail to be of the utmost service in the investigation. The result of their inquiries was most satisfactory, and placed the truth of the narrative we have given beyond all reasonable doubt; Petruccia's unfinished building was immediately resumed, and a handsome church, together with a large monastery attached to it, were completed in less than three years.

A MUSICIAN FROM HEAVEN, OR THE APPARITION AT THE CONVENT OF ST. CECILIA.

One day toward the close of the sixteenth century, when the iconoclasts or image-breakers were all-powerful in the Netherlands, there met four brothers in the town of Aix-la-Chapelle. Three of them were students from Wittemberg, and the fourth held the situation of preacher in Antwerp; and they had come to Aix-la-Chapelle to take possession of a property that had been left them by an uncle lately deceased. Not having any acquaintances in the place, they took up their quarters at a hotel. Here they lived very pleasantly

for a few days, the preacher entertaining them with an account of all the wonderful changes that had recently been made in the country from which he came in matters of religion.

Now it happened that the feast of Corpus Christi was at hand, and the four brothers, inflamed by fanaticism, youth, and the evil example of so many others in other parts of the country, determined to give Aix-la-Chapelle also a sample of their dexterity in the art of image-breaking. The preacher, who had more than once headed such enterprises, collected on the evening before the feast a number of young men, sons of merchants and students devoted to the new doctrine, who spent the night carousing in the tavern; and at break of day, having provided themselves with crowbars and other instruments of destruction, they proceeded to the Convent of St. Cecilia, which was outside the gates of the town, and which they had chosen as the scene of their reckless operations. A signal was agreed upon, at which the assault should be begun upon the stained-glass windows, rich with stories from the Sacred Scriptures, and, assured of finding many adherents among the crowd, they determined to proceed with the work of destruction till there was not left one stone upon another.

The Abbess, who even before dawn had received information of the danger which threatened the convent, sent to the imperial officer then commanding in the town, requesting a guard for its protection. But he was one of those who secretly favored the new school, and he refused the guard on the plea that they were ghosts which had frightened her, and that there was not even a shadow of danger for her convent. Meanwhile the hour appointed for the commencement of the ceremonies was approaching, and the nuns prepared for Mass with much prayer and under a painful apprehension of all that might probably happen. They could count upon no defender save an old steward of the convent, now past seventy, who planted himself at the entrance of the church, with a few young boys whom he had armed for the occasion.

To add to the troubles and anxieties of the nuns on this memorable morning, it so happened that the leader and mistress of the choir, Sister Antonia, had been attacked by a violent nervous fever a few days before; so that, besides their alarm at the four sacrilegious brothers, who might already be seen wrapped up in their large mantles, waiting behind the pillars of the church, the convent was in the greatest embarrassment as to the due performance of the music appropriate to so high a festival. The Abbess on the previous evening

had ordered a Mass, the production of an old Italian master whose name is unknown, which was remarkable for the peculiar tone of sanctity and grandeur which breathed through its composition, and now anxiously sent to make new inquiries for Sister Antonia; but the nun who went to see her brought back word that their dear sister was in a state of absolute insensibility, so that it was useless to expect that she could by any possibility conduct the performance.

Meanwhile some alarming scenes had already taken place in the church, now filled with more than a hundred men of all ranks and ages, armed with axes and crowbars, and a variety of other similar instruments; they had spoken in the most unseemly manner to the persons stationed at the porches of the church, and made use of lan guage the most insolent and shameless toward the nuns, who now and then glided through the aisles on some pious errand. Matters, indeed, had gone so far that the old steward hastened to the sacristy, and there on his knees implored the Abbess to postpone the festival and to take refuge in the town under the protection of the commandant. But the Abbess continued inflexible in her resolution, that this festival, ordained for the honor and glory of God, should at all hazards be celebrated; she reminded the steward of his duty to protect with life and limb the High Mass and solemn procession about to be held in the church, and, as the bell was then tolling, ordered the nuns, who surrounded her in fear and trembling, to select any music, however inferior, so they might commence without delay.

The nuns were taking their places; the parts of a Mass which they had frequently sung before had just been distributed, when suddenly Sister Antonia, in sound and perfect health, though somewhat pale, appeared slowly ascending the stairs, carrying under her arm the Mass of that old Italian master for the performance of which the Abbess had expressed so great an anxiety. "No matter, sisters, no matter!" was her reply to the inquiries of the astonished nuns as to the secret of her wonderful recovery; and, giving to each their several parts, she seated herself at the organ. No sooner had she commenced than the pious sisters felt in their breasts a most heavenly and miraculous feeling of consolation; the very anxiety which they felt only helped to waft their souls, as on wings, still higher and higher. The Mass was performed with the utmost dignity and grandeur. Not a breath was heard in the aisles or nave throughout the entire service; during the Kyrie especially, and yet more at the Gloria, it seemed as though the whole congregation had been stricken dead; even the dust on the pavement remained unstirred by the

wind, as if in defiance of the four sacrilegious brothers and their followers.

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Six years afterward, when this event had been long forgotten, the mother of these four young men arrived from The Hague, and instituted inquiries, with the aid of the magistrates, as to what road they had taken on leaving Aix-la-Chapelle; for that they had never since been heard of. The last accounts received of them in the Netherlands came, she said, in a letter written by the preacher to his friend, a schoolmaster in Antwerp, on the eve of the festival of Corpus Christi, six years before; and in it he had given a detailed description of an enterprise they had projected against the Convent of St. Cecilia, but of which she would not now communicate any further particulars.

After many vain efforts to discover the objects of her search, the magistrates recollected that many years before, about the period she mentioned, four young men, whose country and parentage were unknown, had been confined in the lunatic asylum recently founded by the Emperor. But as they were suffering from religious derangement, and, as the magistrate seemed to imply from obscure report, of such a character as to lead to the impression that they were Catholics, the description so little answered the well-known disposition of her sons that the unhappy woman paid little or no heed to the information. At length, however, being struck by many of the particulars given, she went one day, accompanied by an officer of the court, to the asylum, and begged to be permitted to see the four unfortunate lunatics.

They were seated, in long black mantles, at a table, on which stood a crucifix. They appeared to be praying before it in silence, their folded hands resting on the table. The unfortunate mother, recognizing her sons, sank powerless on a chair. To her inquiries as to the nature of their insanity, the governor replied that they were simply engaged in the adoration of the Redeemer, imagining that they had a clearer conception than others of His divinity as the true Son of the one living God. He said that they had now led this ascetic life for more than six years; that they slept little, ate little, never opened their lips, and never rose from their seats save at midnight, and then only for the purpose of intoning the *Gloria in excelsis*, which they did with a voice loud enough to shatter the very windows of the house. He concluded by assuring her that, notwithstanding all this, these patients enjoyed perfect health, and even a certain de-

ST. CECILIA.

St. Cecilia, the Patroness of Music

ST. CECILIA, from her assiduity in singing the divine praises, is regarded as the patroness of music. St. Chrysostom elegantly extols the good effect of sacred music, and shows how strongly the fire of divine love is kindled in the soul by devout psalmody. By this homage of praise we join the heavenly spirits in their uninterrupted songs of adoration, love, and praise. And by such music we express the spiritual joy of our hearts in this heavenly function, and excite ourselves therein to holy jubilation and devotion. Divine love and praise are the work of the heart, without which all works or exterior signs are hypocrisy and mockery. Yet, as we are bound to consecrate to God our voices, and all our organs and faculties, and all creatures which we use, so we ought to employ them all in magnifying his sanctity, greatness, and glory, and sometimes to accompany our interior affections of devotion with the most expressive exterior signs.

St. Augustine tells us that "it is useful in moving piously the mind and kindling the affections of divine love." St. Charles Borromeo in his youth allowed himself no other amusement but that of grave music, with a view to the Church. Soft and effeminate music, however, should be shunned with abhorrence, as the corrupter of the heart and the poison of virtue.—*Butler.*

CHRISTMAS VESPER HYMN

Depart a while, each thought of care,
Be earthly things forgotten all;
And speak, my soul, thy vesper prayer,
Obedient to that sacred call.
For, hark! the pealing chorus swells,
Devotion chants the hymn of praise:
And now of joy and hope it tells,
Till, fainting on the ear, it says,
Gloria tibi, Domine.

Thine, wondrous Babe of Galilee!
Fond theme of David's harp and song,
Thine are the notes of minstrelsy;
To Thee its ransomed chords belong.
And hark! again the chorus swells,
The song is wafted on the breeze,
And to the listening earth it tells,
In accents soft and sweet as these,
Gloria tibi, Domine.

My heart doth feel that still He's near,
To meet the soul in hours like this:
Else why, O why, that falling tear
When all is peace, and love, and bliss?
But hark! that pealing chorus swells
Anew its thrilling vesper strain,
And still of hope and joy it tells,
And bids creation sing again,
Gloria tibi, Domine.

—*Archbishop Hughes*

gree of cheerfulness, though of a somewhat grave and solemn character; that whenever any one pronounced them deranged they compassionately shrugged their shoulders, and more than once exclaimed that if the good town of Aix-la-Chapelle were only to know as much as they did every one of its inhabitants would leave his business, kneel down round the crucifix, and employ his time in singing the *Gloria in excelsis*, like themselves.

The wretched woman, no longer able to endure the painful sight, at length allowed herself to be conducted home; and on the following morning, hoping to gain some information as to the cause which had produced this extraordinary effect, she sought the house of Herr Veit Gotthelf, a wealthy cloth-merchant of the town, who had been mentioned in the letter written by the preacher as one who took an active part in the project for the destruction of the Convent of St. Cecilia. Veit Gotthelf received the stranger with much courtesy; but on learning her business he bolted the door, and after requesting her to be seated he cautiously began his narrative in the following words:

"My good lady, provided you promise not to implicate me, who some six years since was in habits of close intimacy with your sons, in any judicial investigations which may hereafter arise out of this affair, I will deal frankly with you, and tell you all I know without reserve. It is quite true that we harbored the intention spoken of in the letter you refer to; and by what means this project, planned and arranged with admirable precision and sagacity, came to be frustrated in the execution, I have never been able to discover; Heaven itself seems to have taken the convent of these good women under its holy protection. All I know is, that, as a preliminary to more decided measures, your sons had already indulged in many wanton pranks, disturbing the divine service, and that upward of three hundred miscreants, armed with crowbars and torches, only awaited the signal of the preacher to raze the church to the ground. But instead of this, at the first sound of the music, your sons simultaneously took off their hats with an air of reverence that struck us all with surprise; then, by degrees, they buried their faces in their hands, as though in some strange access of deep and speechless emotion; and after a while the preacher, turning round suddenly, called on us all, in a loud and terrible voice, to do as they had done and to uncover our heads. In vain did some of the party touch his arm, and beg of him in a whisper to give the preconcerted signal. Instead of answering, the preacher crossed his hands on his breast, dropped

on his knees, and, together with his three brothers, bowing his head with fervor to the very ground, recited in an undertone those very prayers at which the moment before he had been openly scoffing. Utterly perplexed at such a spectacle, the crowd of fanatics, deprived of their leader, remained standing, undecided and inactive, until the conclusion of the wonderful musical composition that had just been performed by the choir; then, as several of those who had committed the disturbances were seized and taken off by a guard, the miserable gang had no alternative but to retire from the church and disperse. That evening, after many fruitless inquiries at the hotel for your sons, who had not yet returned, I went back with a few friends in a great state of alarm to the convent, with the view of obtaining further information from the door-keepers, who had been actively engaged in assisting the imperial guard. But how can I describe my horror, madam, on beholding these men transformed, as it were, into stone, lying prostrate, with folded hands, before the altar, and kissing the ground with most enthusiastic fervor! It was in vain that the convent steward pulled their cloaks and shook them by the arm, begging of them to leave the church, which was already quite dark. They heeded neither threat nor entreaty, but half rose up as if in a dream, until the steward, with some of his servants, laid hold of them and led them out of the church. Then only did they consent to follow us to the town, though not without heavy sighs, and constantly looking round, as if their hearts were breaking at this parting from the church. We repeatedly asked them what had happened, thus thoroughly to change their whole being; but they made no other reply than by pressing our hands, looking at us kindly, then gazing on the ground and wiping from time to time the tears from their eyes, with an expression the remembrance of which still to this very day deeply affects me. Arrived at their lodgings, they very ingeniously made a cross of birch rods, and, setting it upon a little mound of wax, placed it on the large table in the centre of the room, between two lights; and then, as if their senses were closed to everything else in the world, they seated themselves at the table, and commenced with folded hands their acts of silent adoration, while their friends, who came crowding to see them in increasing numbers, stood round in separate groups, wringing their hands in unutterable anguish at witnessing such strange and ghost-like behavior. They refused to partake of the dinner which they had ordered for the entertainment of their accomplices, nor would they at a later hour retire to the beds that had been prepared for them in

the adjoining chamber. By and by, at the hour of midnight, your four sons, after listening for a moment to the dull striking of the clock, rose abruptly with one accord from their seats, and began to intone the *Gloria in excelsis* with a voice as terrible as the howling of wolves and leopards in the icy winter season. I assure you, the very pillars of the house shook again, and the windows gave forth a sound as though handfuls of sand had been thrown against them. We rushed out without cloaks or hats through the neighboring streets, which soon became filled with crowds of people, roused suddenly from their slumbers. The mob, breaking through the house-door, reached up-stairs to the hall in search of the cause of all this clamor; yet your sons still continued their dreadful chant, without paying the least attention to the anger of the landlord or the exclamations of the surrounding multitude. At length, when the clock struck one, they suddenly stopped, wiped from their foreheads the perspiration which was falling in large drops on the table, and, spreading out their cloaks, laid them down on the hard floor to take an hour's repose. With the first crowing of the cock, they rose again, resumed their seats round the table, with the crucifix in the midst, and recommenced their melancholy mode of existence, which exhaustion alone had forced them for a moment to interrupt. They would take no advice or assistance from the landlord; they only begged him to deny them to such of their friends as might come as usual to visit them in the morning, asked for some bread and water and a little straw for their bed at night; in short, they conducted themselves in such a manner that the landlord felt bound to notify the case to the magistrates, and beg them to assist him in getting rid of his lodgers, who were doubtless possessed by some evil spirit. They were subjected to medical inspection, and, being declared deranged, were lodged in the lunatic asylum where you have seen them."

Three days afterward, the poor mother set out with a female friend to the convent, for the melancholy purpose of viewing with her own eyes the spot where God had so smitten her sons to the earth, as if with invisible lightning. The lady Abbess having heard of her arrival, requested that she might be sent for to her own room, where they entered into very earnest conversation on the subject of the melancholy history in which they were both so deeply interested. On a desk, by the side of the Abbess, lay a piece of music, the scores of a Mass, and the lady timidly asked if this were the same composition which had been performed on that fearful day. On receiving an answer in the affirmative, she rose in a state of great excitement,

and examined the unknown and magical signs, which seemed to her like the mysterious work of some fearful spirit, and, on finding the page opened at the *Gloria in excelsis*, was on the point of sinking to the ground. It seemed to her as though the same mysterious power which had crushed the intellects of her children was now rushing with equal force on her own devoted head; she feared that she was about to lose her own senses also from the mere sight; and after having hastily pressed her lips to the page, with an intense feeling of humility and resignation to the divine will, she resumed her seat. "It was God, my dear lady," said the Abbess, "who protected our convent on that extraordinary day against the contemplated violence of your children, now so heavily afflicted. No one has the least idea who it was that in the confusion and distress of that dreadful hour, when the image-breakers were on the point of rushing in upon us, sat calmly and quietly at the organ and directed the execution of that composition you see lying before you. It is certain that Sister Antonia, who was the only member of our community capable of doing it, lay on her sick-bed during the whole period of its performance, devoid of all consciousness and deprived of the use of all her limbs. The sister who had been selected to attend her did not once quit her bedside the whole of that forenoon during the celebration of the festival of Corpus Christi, and, in fact, Sister Antonia never recovered from the state of insensibility in which she was on the morning of that day, but died that very same evening. The Archbishop of Trèves does not hesitate to say that he believes it to have been St. Cecilia herself who wrought this fearful yet glorious miracle; and I have just received a brief from His Holiness the Pope expressing the same opinion."

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The lady returned to The Hague, and was received the following year into the bosom of the Catholic Church. Her sons passed in a good old age to a calm and peaceful death, after intoning once more, according to their custom, the *Gloria in excelsis*.

THE MOORISH MAIDEN, OR THE LUTE AND THE SONG.

THE tents of Ferdinand and Isabella spread far and wide before the walls of Grenada, enclosed within which, and hoping in vain for succor, the cowardly Boabdil, whom his people named in derision the

little king, found no consolation for his calamities but in the cruelties which he practised more and more ferociously from day to day. But while discouragement and despair gradually took possession of the troops and people of Grenada, the hope of triumph and zeal for battle animated the warriors of Spain. They made as yet no general assault, but contented themselves with firing on the ramparts, and forcing back farther and farther the outworks of the besieged. These little skirmishes were more like joyous tournaments than bloody battles; and even the death of the Christian heroes who fell in them served but to raise the courage of their brethren, for their obsequies were celebrated with all the splendor the Church could throw around them, as of martyrs for the faith.

In the midst of the camp, Isabella had caused to be erected a wooden building, crowned with towers, on the loftiest of which floated the sacred banner of the cross. The interior was so arranged as to serve for a cloister and a church, where Benedictine nuns sang their holy office daily; and every morning the Queen, accompanied by her attendant ladies and a company of knights, came there to hear Mass said by her confessor, at which a choir of nuns assisted.

One morning Isabella distinguished a voice among them, the beautiful quality of which made it heard through all the others, and the manner in which it pronounced the words was so singular that she could not doubt but that it was joining for the first time in the holy service. The Queen looked around her, and, perceiving that her attendants participated in her astonishment, began to suspect some strange adventure, when her eyes fell on her brave General Aguilar, who was placed not far from her, and who, kneeling on his chair, his hands joined, and his eyes glistening with earnestness, was gazing fixedly at the grating of the choir. When Mass was ended, Isabella went to the apartment of Donna Maria, the Superior, and asked who this strange singer was.

"You may remember, O Queen," said Donna Maria, in answer, "that, a month ago, Don Aguilar had formed the project of attacking one of the enemy's outworks, which supports a magnificent terrace, used by the Moors as a public promenade. That night the songs of the pagans resounded in our camp like the voices of syrens; and the brave Aguilar chose it intentionally, on purpose to destroy the haunt of the unbelievers. Already the outwork was carried, and the women taken prisoners and borne away, when an unexpected reinforcement obliged the conqueror to retire to the camp; where, however, the enemy dared not pursue him, so that the prisoners remained

in the hands of our people. Among them was one woman whose despair excited the attention of Don Aguilar. He drew near to her; she was veiled, and, as if her grief could find no other expression but in song, she took the lute which was hung round her neck by a ribbon of gold, and, after having struck a few chords, she began to pour forth, in the form of a ballad, a pathetic lament on the forcible separation of two lovers. Aguilar, deeply moved by her sorrow, resolved to send her back into Grenada; and in gratitude she threw herself at his feet, and raised her veil. 'Art thou not Zulima, the pearl of all the singing-maidens of Grenada?' cried Aguilar; and it was in fact Zulima, whom he had seen once before when he was on a mission at the court of King Boabdil. 'I will give thee thy liberty,' he continued. But at that moment the reverend Father Agostino Sanchez, who had come to the Spanish camp, the crucifix in his hand, and was standing near, interrupted him, suggesting that it was no kindness to the captive to send her back into a camp of misbelievers, and that perhaps, if she remained among Christians, the grace of God might enlighten her and bring her back into the fold of the faithful. In consequence of this representation, Aguilar determined that she should remain a month among us, and that if at the end of that time she should not be awakened to the faith she should then return to Grenada. It was thus, O Queen," continuued the Superior, "that Zulima came among us in this our cloister. At first she gave herself up to unmeasured grief, and filled the cloister with songs, now wild and fearful, now soft and plaintive; her ringing voice was heard everywhere. One night, as we were all gathered together in the choir of the church, singing our holy office by the light of the waxen tapers, I discerned Zulima standing by the open door of the choir, gazing at us with a grave and meditative aspect; and when we left the chapel, walking two and two, I saw Zulima kneeling near an image of Our Blessed Lady. The following day she sang no Moorish songs, but passed it in silence and reflection; and soon we heard her trying on her lute the chants which we had sung in church, and afterward endeavoring, in a low voice, to sing them herself, and even to imitate the sacred words, which sounded strangely in her mouth.

"I felt that the grace of God was manifesting itself in this song, and therefore I sent Sister Emanuela, our choir mistress, to the Moorish maiden, that she might keep alive the sacred spark which seemed to be kindled within her; and in truth, in the midst of the holy psalms which they sang together, her heart awakened to faith. Zu-

lima has not yet been received into the bosom of the Church by the Sacrament of Baptism, but it has been permitted her to join us in praising the Lord and in raising her wonderful voice for the glory of our holy religion."

The Queen rejoiced greatly in the conversion of Zulima, who some days after was baptized, and received the name of Julia, the Queen herself, and the Marquis of Cadiz, Henry of Gusman, standing as her sponsors. After her baptism, however, a singular change seemed to come over her; she would sometimes trouble the service of the church by strange sounds, while the low murmurs of her lute were like the moanings of a distant storm. She herself became more and more restless, and even sometimes interrupted the Latin hymns with Moorish words. The choir mistress, Emanuela, admonished her to resist this temptation; but Julia, far from following her council, would often, to the great scandal of the sisters, sing Moorish songs at the very time when the chants of the Church were echoing through the cloisters, touching at the same time on her instrument a light flute-like accompaniment, which formed a singular contrast to the solemn chords of the religious music.

One day, when the Queen, accompanied by the chief captains of her army, went as usual to hear Mass at the chapel of the Benedictine nuns, a beggar covered with rags was standing at the principal gate, who, when the guards wished to drag him away, rushed from side to side like a madman, and even struck against the Queen. Aguilar, irritated by this, was about to strike him with his sword, when the beggar, drawing a lute from under his mantle, drew from it such wild notes as startled all around. The guards at last succeeded in leading him away, and it was told the Queen that he was a Moorish prisoner who had lost his wits, and who was allowed to run up and down the camp to amuse the soldiers by his songs. The Queen entered the church, and the Mass began. The sisters of the choir intoned the Sanctus; but at the moment when Julia began with a powerful voice, "*Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria tua,*" the notes of a lute rung through the church, and the young convert, closing her books, prepared to leave the choir. The Superior strove in vain to detain her. "Do you not hear," she said wildly, "the master's splendid chords? I must go to sing with him." But Donna Emanuela, holding her by the arm, said in a solemn voice: "Sinner, who thus forsakest the service of thy Lord, and whose heart is full of worldly thoughts, fly from this place; but know that thy voice shall fail thee, and the tones which the Lord has lent thee to praise Him

shall be hushed forever." Julia turned her head in silence, and disappeared.

At the hour of matins, when the nuns were just assembling in the church, a thick cloud of smoke rose to its roof; and very soon the crackling flames burst through its wooden walls and communicated to the cloister, so that it was with great difficulty that the lives of the nuns were saved. The trumpet was immediately sounded through the camp, to rouse the soldiers from their sleep; and Aguilar was seen to rush among them, scorched, and in wild disorder. He had sought in vain to save Julia from the midst of the flames—she had disappeared. In a short time the whole of Isabella's camp was a heap of ruins, and the Moors, taking advantage of the tumult, made an attack on the Christian army. But the Spaniards displayed on this occasion a valor even more brilliant than usual, and when the enemy were driven back within their entrenchments, the Queen Isabella, assembling her chiefs, gave orders to build a town on the spot which her camp had occupied, thereby announcing to the Moors that the siege would never be raised.

During the building of this town, the Moors were continually harassing the Spaniards, and many bloody conflicts took place, in which the valor of Aguilar was particularly distinguished. Returning one day from a skirmish, he left his squadron near a wood of myrtles, and continued his solitary way absorbed in thought. The image of Julia was continually before his eyes; even during the combat he had seemed several times to hear her voice, and in this moment he fancied that in the far distance he could distinguish singular sounds, a mixture as it were of Moorish modulations with ecclesiastical chants. While straining his ear to catch these distant sounds, the clang of armor echoed near him. He turned, and saw a Moorish horseman mounted on a light Arab horse gallop rapidly by, while at the same time a javelin whizzed past his ear. He rushed after his assailant, but a second javelin pierced the chest of his horse, who reared with pain and rage, and threw his rider into the dust. He rose quickly, but the Moor was already upon him, standing in his stirrups, and with his scimitar raised. In the twinkling of an eye, however, Aguilar was on his feet, and, straining his opponent in his arms, threw him violently on the ground, and, kneeling on his breast, pointed his poignard at his throat. He was on the point of stabbing him, when he heard the Moor with a sigh pronounce the name of Zulima.

"What name is that," exclaimed Aguilar, "that thou darest to pronounce in my presence?"

"Strike, strike!" said the Moor; "strike him who has vowed thy death! Learn, Christian, that Hichem is the last of the race of Alhamar, and that it was he who snatched Zulima from thee. I am the beggar who burnt thy church on purpose to carry off the soul of my thoughts. Strike, then, and end my life, since I have not been able to take thine."

"Zulima still lives!" exclaimed Aguilar.

"She lives," answered the Moor, with a bitter laugh; "but your idol has smitten her with a magic curse, and our fairest flower has withered in your hands. Her melodious voice has ceased to sound, and her life is ready to forsake her with her gift of song. Strike then, Christian, for you have already bereft me of more than life."

Aguilar rose slowly. "Hichem," he said, "Zulima was my prisoner by the laws of war. Enlightened by divine grace, she has forsaken the religion of Mahomet. Do not then name the soul of thy thoughts, her who is become my lady, or prepare to meet me in fair combat. Resume thy arms."

Hichem hastily resumed his buckler and scimitar; but, instead of rushing upon Aguilar, he set spurs to his horse, and disappeared with the swiftness of lightning.

After a time the Moors, continually repulsed in their sallies, and worn by famine, found themselves forced to capitulate and to open their gates to Ferdinand and Isabella, who made their triumphal entry into Grenada. The grand mosque was blest by the priests and converted into a cathedral, when there was sung a solemn Te Deum in thanksgiving to the God of armies. The rage and fury of the Moors being well known, bands of soldiers were placed in all the neighboring streets to protect the procession, and Aguilar, who commanded one of these bands, was advancing toward the cathedral, when he felt himself wounded in the left shoulder by an arrow. At the same moment, a troop of Moors rushed out of a narrow street and attacked the Christians with inconceivable fury. Hichem was at their head; and Aguilar, immediately recognizing him, joined in fight with him hand to hand, and did not leave him till he had plunged his sword deep in his heart. After this, the Spaniards pursued the Moors into a large stone house, whose gates opened to admit them, and then reclosed on them immediately; an instant after, a cloud of arrows from the windows of this house wounded many of Aguilar's soldiers, and he commanded that torches should be brought and the house set on fire. This order was executed, and already the flames were mounting even to the roof, when a wonder-

ful voice made itself heard from the midst of the burning building, chanting, "*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.*"

"Julia, O Julia!" cried Aguilar, in despair; and immediately the doors were flung open, and Julia, dressed as a Benedictine nun, came forth, still singing, "*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus;*" while behind her marched a long file of Moors, their heads cast down and their hands crossed on their breast. The Spaniards drew back involuntarily; and Julia, followed by the Moors, advanced through their ranks to the cathedral, on entering which she intoned, "*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.*"

The people fell on their knees, and Julia, her eyes turned toward heaven, walked with a firm step up to the high altar, where Ferdinand and Isabella were engaged in assisting at the holy function; and as soon as the last strophe, "*Dona nobis pacem,*" was concluded fell lifeless into the arms of the Queen. All the Moors who had followed her received that same day the holy Sacrament of Baptism.

HEROISM OF THE CAPTIVE NUNS OF MINSK.

For three centuries there has been established in Poland a Greek Church in connection with the Holy See; and bitter is the hatred with which it has been uniformly regarded by the Russian government. Of late years more strenuous efforts than ever have been made to oblige or to persuade the Roman Catholics to forsake the true fold, and unite themselves to the national establishment of Russia,—the Greek schismatics. In some instances these efforts have unhappily been successful, and about ten or twelve years since even three bishops apostatized, taking with them a considerable portion of the people. These bishops were immediately rewarded with high honors and emoluments; and they spared no exertions to ingratiate themselves still further with their imperial master, by bringing over, if possible, the faithful remnant of their late flocks. Siemaszko, the apostate Bishop of Minsk, especially distinguished himself in this unhallowed labor; and the following narrative may be relied upon as supplying details of the almost incredible brutalities of which he was guilty in his endeavors to overcome the constancy of a religious community in his diocese.

EXPULSION FROM MINSK—SUFFERINGS AT WITEBSK.

At the time of the apostacy of Siemaszko there was a convent of Basilian nuns in the town, who employed themselves, under their

rule, in the service of God, the instruction of children, and the relief of the poor. They were called the Daughters of the Holy Trinity, and the Superior was the reverend Mother Irena-Macrina-Mieczyslainska, or Mother Macrina, as we shall more briefly call her. Their piety, goodness, and charity had endeared them to the country round; but Siemaszko only hated them the more on account of their very virtues, and was determined to gain them over to the schism at any cost; for he well knew that to gain them would be to gain the whole town. The emperor had empowered him to deal with his refractory diocese as the interests of religion might require, a phrase the true significance of which will appear from the sequel; and he had issued a ukase, or decree, putting at the disposal of the Bishop military force, if it should be required.

Mother Macrina saw in this decree the death-warrant of her community, either in this world or in the next, according as they should have courage to hold out for the love of Christ, or the weakness to yield; and she assembled her nuns and put before them the choice. They were not long in deciding, and, when Siemaskzo summoned them to surrender their faith, they with one voice refused to obey. He was furious at their refusal, but said that the Emperor would allow them three months to reconsider their determination. Mother Macrina proposed to the sisters that they should seek some safer asylum till the storm blew over. "And you," said they, "what will you do?" "I," she replied with angelic sweetness, but invincible determination, "I will die at my post, if I am not snatched from it by force." "Then let us hear no more of flight," they rejoined, "for our duty is to die at your side." So they all resolved to bear patiently the worst.

Three days had scarcely elapsed when Siemaszko, accompanied by the civil governor of Minsk and an armed troop, broke into the convent at five o'clock in the morning, just as the nuns were leaving their cells to assemble in choir. The soldiers placed themselves at the doors of their rooms to prevent their going back into them, and then Siemaszko harangued them as follows: "By His Majesty's order I gave you three months; but I come at the third day, for the evil might become worse. This is the last moment of liberty you will have. You may still choose between the riches you now possess, in addition to those which the magnanimity of the Emperor is ready to add to them, if you join the orthodox religion, and the hardship of Siberia if you persist in your refusal."

"Well, then, we choose the best," was the immediate answer;

"namely, labor in Siberia rather than abandon Jesus Christ and His Vicar."

"Wait a while," he replied, with a sneer, "and you will tell a different tale. When the knout has taken off the skin you were born in, and another skin has covered your bones, you will have become more tractable."

After kneeling to take leave of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament,—a consolation granted them by the civil governor, although refused by Siemaszko,—the nuns rose to depart. One only remained upon her knees; her Sisters proceeded to raise her, but she was dead; her heart had broken at being driven away from her peaceful retirement, where she had served God for thirty years.

On leaving the church, Mother Macrina threw herself at the governor's feet, and entreated his permission to carry a crucifix away with them. Siemaszko tried to prevent it, and had himself snatched from their hands a crucifix of silver and enriched with precious stones, which contained the relics of St. Basil; but the governor allowed them to take one made of wood, and which they ordinarily used in the processions. Notwithstanding its weight, Mother Macrina carried it, resting on her left shoulder, from Minsk to Witebsk, and the more she suffered from the pressure, the more she loved the sacred wound on the left shoulder of Jesus, where the Cross rested during His passage to Calvary.

The nuns were chained two and two together. The first day they were driven fifteen leagues, and most of the sisters sank again and again from exhaustion; nevertheless they were urged on, and in seven days they arrived at Witebsk. There they were lodged in a convent of "black nuns," as they were called. These were mostly widows of Russian soldiers, and women of abandoned character. The house itself had belonged to a community of Basilian Sisters, who had been turned out to make way for these "black nuns;" and fourteen of them were now found in irons by Mother Macrina. At their request she adopted them as her own daughters, and from that time they shared all the sufferings of the Nuns of Minsk. Their daily life was in this fashion: Before six o'clock in the morning they had to sweep the house, light the fires, and prepare the wood and water for the house; then for six hours they had to break stones and wheel them away in barrows, to which they were chained; from twelve to one they were allowed to rest; then hard labor again till dark, when they were required to attend the cattle and finish the household work. Their sufferings were greatly aggravated by the

wanton cruelty of the "black nuns," who purposely soiled the house and upset the water. The labors of the day over, they were shut up in their prison without having their irons taken off. It was cold and damp, and their only bed was a little straw; but to make up for all, they had their crucifix. At its feet they knelt at night, saying their office, and praying for the conversion of the Emperor, allowing themselves sometimes only two hours for sleep.

Their food was so miserable that in summer they lived on herbs, and in winter on what was given to the animals. But the "black nuns" grudged them even this, saying that "they did not deserve even pigs' meat." Nor was this all. Notwithstanding the severity of a Polish winter, they were allowed no fuel, so that their limbs were often frozen, and their wounds became more and more tender.

Not the least part of their sufferings was the loss of holy communion, and they lamented the absence of their old director Michalewicz, whom they had not seen since they left Minsk; when, therefore, one day he entered their cell, they ran to meet him with cries of joy. But they were immediately repulsed by the strange expression upon his countenance. They did not know that he had apostatized, and that he came not to administer the comfort of the sacraments, but at Siemaszko's bidding, who had counted much on his influence to persuade them to desist from their opposition. They received his suggestion with the more horror that they had once regarded him with so much love; and he became, as we shall presently see, the most bitter of their persecutors.

Siemaszko was determined to put an end to the struggle by some decisive step. With this view he ordered them to be scourged. Michalewicz, to whom the execution of the order was committed, increased the severity of the torture. Instead of thirty lashes, he made the number fifty, and had the floggings repeated twice a week. On every Wednesday and Saturday all the sisters underwent this fearful infliction, and he stood by and watched for some sigh or groan, in token of submission, but in vain. He heard nought but the prayer, "By Thy cross and passion, Jesus, save my soul!" which each sister uttered at every lash. When he heard it not, it was because heaven had opened its gates to receive another martyr.

The sisters prepared themselves for the scourging by meditation on the Passion of Jesus Christ; they were compelled to witness each other's sufferings, but all the while the torture lasted they thought they saw Him scourged, and gathered strength rather than terror from the sight. Their greatest pain was that this scourging was

carried on in the presence of the Russian clergy and other men. But even this grief too only united them the more closely to the shame of Jesus.

The first who died from the scourging was Sister Columba; she was dragged from the torture to her labor, and died immediately. Sister Susan expired under the lash, and Sister Sitauva the following night, with her eyes fixed on the crucifix and her head resting on the knees of Mother Macrina. Nor were these three the only martyrs. Sister Baptista was burnt alive by the "black nuns," who, it is believed, were in a state of intoxication at the time; and Sister Nepomucene was killed by a blow on the head; another sister, Coletta, had her ribs broken, and died in consequence.

But still the constancy of the survivors remained unshaken, and Michalewicz, who had promised Siemaszko that in a short time he would bring them all over, began to receive reproaches, not unmixed with threats, for his delay. Accordingly, he hit upon another plan. He divided the sisters into four different bands and shut them up separately, in the hope that he should then have less difficulty with them. The place in which he confined Mother Macrina, with eight of her nuns, was a cave so damp that the whole place swarmed with worms, which crawled all over their persons, and into their mouths, ears, and noses, if for a moment they tried to compose themselves to sleep. They had only putrid vegetables given them to eat; but yet they were happier than they had been since they had left Minsk, and they composed a hymn, which they sung continually.

Michalewicz wrote to Siemaszko that they were all ready to recant, and he promised to come immediately and receive their abjuration. In the mean while he redoubled his efforts to make his words good, going round to all the dungeons with a paper for the poor inmates to sign, to which he declared that the others had already given in their adhesion.

"He lies," said Mother Macrina; "the wretch, he lies! No one has signed; of that I am certain. Give me the paper!" and she tore it from his hands. Not a signature was there. Pale with shame, Michalewicz clutched up a handful of filth, stuffed it into her mouth, and then slunk away.

The next time that they found themselves altogether with their wheelbarrows they saluted each other with unspeakable joy, and fell on their knees to thank God for another victory, singing the Te Deum. "Now, my children," said Mother Macrina, cheerfully, "we have had a good rest; let us try and work hard. To work! to work!"

When Siemaszko arrived to pay the sisters the promised visit, he addressed Macrina as mother-general, and brought with him a superb cross from the Emperor; but when he went on to say that he came at their invitation, they thought he was raving; at the same time an involuntary feeling of alarm came over them, lest there should be a traitor among them. The sisters gazed silently on one another, but at last all eyes rested on Mother Macrina. "Infamous creature!" she exclaimed, "what have you said? Who has invited you hither?" "You yourself," he replied. At these words the sisters uttered a cry of distress, and the most sullen silence succeeded; when Mother Macrina snatched from Siemaszko's hand the pretended petition, opened it in the presence of the sisters, and at once recognized Michalewicz's writing, and with indignation and contempt she flung the paper back in his face. He attempted to brave out the forgery with another lie.

"Blood of a Polish dog!" he exclaimed, "have you not all licked my feet, asking me as a great favor to make in your name this humble supplication?"

"And do you not fear God, whom you offend by so barefaced a falsehood?" said the holy mother. "You know better than any one that we neither fear death nor martyrdom; how could we then beseech you to bring us your accomplice to receive our apostasy?" Then to Siemaszko she said: "That cross which you bring me from the Emperor suspend on your own breast, already so richly decorated. Once a thief hung upon a cross; now a cross hangs upon a thief. Go! never will you succeed in tempting God's servants."

No sooner had Siemaszko left them than they shed tears of joy, and thanked God for the grace He had just given them. All the sisters pressed around Mother Macrina, and gave that vent to their feelings which the presence of the apostate bishop had so long prevented.

The following day, before he left, Siemaszko caused them to be scourged under his windows, and Michalewicz revenged himself for his disgrace by fresh cruelties. The heavy copper pitchers of water which they had to carry, Michalewicz now obliged them to bear at arm's-length, in order, as he said, that the Polish spirit might not get into the water. It was a great distance, particularly in the winter, when they had to take a long round to get at the river. If, exhausted with fatigue, they drew the pitchers nearer to them, the "black nuns," who accompanied them everywhere, would snatch the

pitcher from their hands, and empty the contents on their head, they had then to begin over again.

When Siemaszko came again, it was to reconcile a Uniate church to the Russo-Greek rite, and he was determined that Mother Macrina and her nuns should assist at the ceremony. This they firmly refused, and the apostate bishop accordingly gave orders that they should be brought in by force. Bleeding and bruised, they were dragged to the door of the church, where a great crowd had assembled, much to Siemaszko's confusion, who would rather have been without so many witnesses. Mother Macrina, whose head was streaming with blood, caught up an axe which was lying by, and, laying her head upon a block of wood, entreated Siemaszko, as he had been their pastor, to be now their executioner. "Cut off our heads and roll them into your church, for never shall our feet walk in. Here is the axe!—here are our heads!"

Siemaszko only replied by knocking the axe out of her hand. It struck one of the sisters on the leg, and inflicted a severe wound. He then struck Mother Macrina on the mouth, and knocked out one of her teeth. She quietly picked it up and presented it to him, saying: "This is the noblest action of your life, monster; and in remembrance of it take this diamond, and set it in your stony heart. Believe me, it will outshine all the jewels for which you have sold your soul." Siemaszko was so stung by these words that he went into a fit with excess of passion, and was obliged to be taken away. The sisters, with fresh blows, were sent back to their labors, singing as they went the Te Deum, in which many of the people joined.

SUFFERINGS AT POLOCK AND SPAS.

After two years the sisters were ordered off to Polock, to assist in building a palace for Siemaszko. They were tied two and two as before, and had to walk in chains. But this was not their greatest trial: their dear crucifix was taken from them. On arriving at Polock, they were placed in a convent, which, like their late prison, also had once belonged to their own Order, but was now occupied by "black nuns" and Russian "popes." They were put under the power of the protopope, Juan Wicrowkin, a drunken fellow, who always carried about with him a knotted thong, with which he struck the poor sisters whenever he met them. The "black nuns" were much more numerous here than at Witobsk, so that their prisoners had each ten tyrants instead of one. Here too, as at

Witobsk, some of the old Catholic sisterhood were kept in confinement. There had been twenty-five; but when Mother Macrina arrived fifteen had perished in the persecution, and she found only ten sisters and one corpse; two of these had lost their reason from blows on the head, yet they were compelled to labor with the others. One of them died soon after the arrival of the Nuns of Minsk; the other, six months afterward. She was found a bloody corpse in her cell, and no doubt she had died under the blows of her executioners.

The sisters were not suffered to remain long at Polock, because the townspeople used to throw them bread over the wall. So they were moved to Spas, and were made to carry all the furniture of the convent to their new abode. Then they were set to level the ground for Siemaszko's palace. Being new to the work, constant accidents happened, which cost the lives of many of the sisters. Five of them were buried alive by earth falling upon them as they were making an excavation. The danger was known beforehand, but no precautions were taken; and when the horrible catastrophe occurred the witnesses of it were not allowed to do anything for the deliverance of the sufferers, and there perhaps they would have remained to this day, but that some brave inhabitants of Polock came by night, and, having dug them out, gave them burial; and the bodies of the martyrs rest in peace.

Their most painful task was breaking stones; for they had no hammers, and were obliged to break one stone against another. The labor was so great that their arms were frequently put out of joint; but they were not on that account relieved from the necessity of breaking the required amount, and the sisters had to replace the bones in their sockets for each other. Whatever inflammation ensued, they had still to go on with their work; and they were soon covered with ulcers and tumors, that broke out all over their bodies. Their clothes (one scanty petticoat was all they had) were soaked in blood, and, faint from want of food, racked with pain, and ready to drop with fatigue, they passed the hours of labor, expecting every moment to die. Then, when night came, they could not sleep; in no position could they find rest, so covered were they with painful wounds; and they were fain to lie in each others' arms, and rest aching heads on no less aching bosoms. But that God gave them strength to endure that cross, they must all have sunk beneath its weight; as it was, three of them died in eight days. One was crushed to death by stones which she had not strength to draw to their appointed place. Obliged to let go the rope, the bucket fell

and the poor laborer was killed; the other two sank from exhaustion. The nuns were not generally allowed to help each other; only Mother Macrina might exchange work with any sister who was exhausted. In this way she saved her life on one occasion, when nine sisters were killed by the falling of a wall. She was on a high scaffolding, when one of them, who was wheeling a barrow below, cried out, "Mother, I can do no more." She accordingly came down, and the other went up to take her place; almost immediately afterward came a great crash and a piercing cry, and on looking round Mother Macrina saw nothing but a cloud of dust. But when the dust had cleared away she saw that the wall had fallen down, and that her nine sisters had disappeared under the ruins. She fainted at the sight, but they scourged her till she recovered and then drove her to her work again.

This misfortune put a stop to the works for some time, and the surviving sisters were employed in breaking stones, carrying wood, and digging; but after a few weeks the building recommenced, as Siemaszko was expected. He had been again informed that the sisters were at length ready to recant; he hastened thither to receive their recantation. Meanwhile they lost two more sisters from scourging. Some indignant persons had scratched on the walls of the Russian church the following doggerel rhyme:

"Here, instead of monasteries,
Are Siberia and the galleys;"

and the poor Nuns of Minsk were accused of it. They were all flogged, and with such barbarity that two of them died.

When Siemaszko arrived, Mother Macrina asked him who had sent for him to tempt them again. "You yourself," said he. "I!" said the Mother indignantly. "Yes, you, or some of your sisters." The nuns burst out into a cry of horror. "Apostate!" said the heroic woman; "traitor to Jesus Christ and His Church, by God's help we will die for the faith as our sisters have died!" At these words Siemaszko struck her on the cheek, upon which she turned to him the other. Indeed, this seems to have been a favorite pastime of his, for in different visits he knocked out nine of her teeth. He then took from his pocket the emperor's ukase, of which we have already spoken, and made her read it aloud.

It approved as "holy, holy, and thrice holy," all that the Archbishop Siemaszko had done or might do for the promotion of the orthodox Greek religion, and commanded all persons, including the

military, to assist him. After she had read it, he took from his pocket a petition which Mother Macrina had written to the emperor, renouncing all their temporal possessions, provided they might die quietly in their own faith, and, showing it to her, struck her such a blow on the face as to break the cartilage of her nose. "I'll teach you to write to the emperor," said he. Then he struck her again, and, taking her by the shoulders and shaking her, he threw her down and stamped upon her. At last he inquired who had written that petition. "I," said the Mother. "All of us," said the sisters. "Who gave you the paper?" "We got it from some poor persons." "And who wrote it?" "We did ourselves." His rage at this passed expression. "When I have taken off three skins, one that you had from God, and the other two from the emperor, you will tell me the truth." The sisters were all scourged; the lashes fell without being counted, and still he stood by and asked, "Who gave you the paper? —who wrote the petition?" But he could find out nothing more, and at length they desisted. One of the sisters died that night, like so many others, on the Mother's knees, and the next day they were driven to labor as usual.

From that time forward the poor were not allowed to come near them, and but for the Jews, who gave them "brandy grains," they must have perished with hunger. They could not exclude the Jews, because they owed them money for brandy. Siemaszko came again the next morning, and with curses urged them to apostatize, and insisted upon knowing who had helped them with their petition. Not succeeding in obtaining the desired information, he went away, enjoining Feodor to torment them more and more; and this winter (1841–1842) their sufferings were greater than ever.

Next spring the floggings twice a week were resumed, and they received fifty lashes each time. Sister Seraphine, who was seventy-two years of age, died under the infliction. At the thirtieth lash the name of Jesus was no more heard—her soul was already in heaven. Twenty yet remained to complete the sentence, and they were given to the corpse. Two other sisters also died, one two hours afterward, and the other not till midnight. "O my Jesus," said Sister Nathalie, "come and console me, for I love you with all my heart;" and so saying she expired. After the sixth scourging, the Russian general, moved by the entreaties of his wife, interfered. They went to the house just as the flogging was about to commence; when his wife saw all the preparations, she swooned away, and the general told the protopope that if he obeyed the orders of the

apostate Bishop, he would have him hanged, for the emperor could not be aware of their horrible cruelty. He had them taken back to prison, and sent them 100 roubles (about £4), in order that they might be enabled to procure themselves some food. They, however, did not enjoy the benefit of this charity, for the protopope appropriated the whole of it. Nor were they much the better for his interference; for, although the floggings were discontinued, Siemaszko was so enraged with the general, that he devised yet worse torments than any that had gone before.

One evening the sisters were brought home from their work earlier than usual, and the deacons, the popes, and a number of savage men, mad with drink and every evil passion, were turned in upon those defenceless women, with full license to work their will with them. God preserved them through that fearful night, He alone knows how; but the morning dawned on a bloody heap of dead or mutilated though still bleeding bodies. Two of the sisters were no more: one lay crushed with the iron hoof of one of those wild beasts; the other was one mass of wounds, so that the fatal blow could not be distinguished. Eight sisters, though alive, had had their eyes forced out and their faces torn; one had her nose bitten off; all were horribly bruised and bitten, and gashed and trampled on, and the floor of the prison was slippery with their blood. Mother Macrina was stabbed in the side in three places and in the arm, besides a gash on the head; yet when she asked to be allowed, wounded as she herself was, to dress the wounds of her children, they bore her away from the cell because she would not purchase the boon by deserting her faith. When Feodor came to remove the dead bodies, his only remark to the nuns was, "See how God punishes you."

This outrage did not pass without comment either from God or man. That night nine cattle belonging to the "black nuns" died in the field, and their four horses were found dead in the stables the next morning. It was a judgment from God in token of His displeasure, and even under Russian tyranny the populace were roused. The excitement gathered strength, though the authorities adopted every possible expedient to arrest it. One gentleman was taken in his own house, and without a trial sent to Siberia, for having had a requiem said for the dead nuns; and a convent of Dominicans, which had long been recognized in the country, was broken up and dispersed at a moment's warning, for saying prayers for the martyred sisters. But Polock was not intimidated, and Siemaszko thought it safe to change the scene of his operations. There was

another house of "black nuns" at Madzioly, and thither the sisters were dispatched. First, however, they received a visit from a Franciscan father named Feolosci, who had sold himself to the schism and become the bosom friend of Siemaszko; the nuns did not know this, and when they saw a Catholic priest their hearts leaped with joy, in the hope of confession and communion. They remarked it as somewhat strange that he only gave them alms and no spiritual consolation. But he seemed ashamed of his apostasy, and it was not till his second visit that he ventured to recommend their giving up their faith, when he employed the following notable argument: If union and orthodoxy be one and the same thing, then what more holy than Siemaszko's desire that under the same monarch there should be but one religion? The sisters were stupefied, and the Mother asked, "Who sent you?" "I am sent by God," he said, "to save your souls, which you have steeped in hell by your obstinacy." "Ah," retorted the holy Mother, "if our souls are in hell, then your own place, Judas, is in heaven." At these words he was going to strike her, when one of the sisters seized him by the shoulders and with the help of the others turned him out of the door. His rage against them was extreme, and some time afterward, before they left Polock, he found means to gratify it. At his instigation, Siemaszko had them shut up for six days and fed on salt herrings, without a drop of water or atom of other food. The raging thirst they at first endured exceeds description. The two first days the agony was insupportable; a burning fire devoured their inside, and the skin of their tongue and palate peeled off with fever. But still the Passion of Jesus sustained them; they thought of His thirst upon the Cross; they thought also of the thirst of the souls in purgatory, and they fell on their faces, offering to God their sufferings in their behalf. God had pity upon them; from that moment they felt neither thirst nor hunger; and on the seventh morning, when they were taken to their labors, they made a vow to abstain from water for that day also, in honor of the seven dolors of Mary.

SUFFERINGS AT MADZIOLY—ESCAPE OF MOTHER MACRINA.

It was in the spring of 1843 that one day they perceived the courtyard of the convent full of armed men. As the presence of soldiers always intimated a change of abode for the sisters, they knew they

were going to leave Polock, and they felt convinced that they were destined for Siberia. "So much the better," said they all; "we shall suffer the more;" and they sang a hymn in honor of the Archangel Michael.

But in this expectation they were deceived; one more attempt was to be made to break their resolution, and their present destination was to Madzioly, a town in the government of Minsk. They set off at night, and all had to go on foot, except those who had lost the use of their limbs; even the poor blind nuns, and those suffering from undressed wounds, had to march with the rest. It was a ghastly procession; yet they bore the sufferings of that toilsome journey for ten days with the same heroic patience. As they were crossing the Dnieper their conductor seemed uneasy lest they should jump into the river to rid themselves of their torments. "Is the river heaven, that we should jump into it?" said one of the sisters, divining the cause of his agitation.

On arriving at Madzioly they were delivered into the hands of the protopope Daniel; the "black nuns" there received them with jeers and laughter: "How fat and fresh you all are! but you have had nothing to try you yet; wait a little, we will find out how to pull you down." The Sisters were then set to the most disgusting offices. To their shame they found there two Basilian monks who had apostatized, and were among the most cruel of their tormentors; they stole the linen which the sisters had to wash for the household, and pawned it to the Jews for brandy, and the sisters were accused of the theft and beaten.

Siemaszko paid them a visit in the autumn, and in the presence of the convent and a number of children assumed a gentle tone, spoke in their own language, offered to put the children under their care; and, after reasoning with them, pointed to a small packet on the table, and said, "That is ready for you as soon as you embrace the orthodox religion." They replied "that they feared neither torments nor death for Jesus Christ, for they would live and die for Him; nor would they teach the children of schismatics, except to bring them up in the Catholic faith." Siemaszko in a rage swore they should be beaten. "Just what we wanted to ask for," said Sister Marsecka. "You will go to hell if you persist," cried Siemaszko. "O my God," was the answer, "how merciful art Thou to endure the presence of such an apostate!"

Siemaszko then ordered that they should be tortured in a new way. They were tied up in sacks with large ropes round their necks,

and taken to the side of one of the lakes surrounding the convent. "Now," said he, "embrace our religion, or I will drown you." "We will not give up Jesus Christ," said they all; "so, demon, do as you are bid." The assistants accordingly jumped into a boat and rowed from the shore, pulling the sisters into the water and towing them behind. Before they were out of their depth, the rowers stopped and made the old offer, to receive the same indignant refusal; then they went into deeper water, and rowed them about for three hours, the cord all the while nearly strangling them.

The ensuing winter was a very severe one for the poor sisters. Their wounds opened afresh with the ice, and they grew weaker and weaker. They were allowed to get wood from the forest, but, chained as they were, they could scarcely bear the weight; and when they had it their stove would not carry off the smoke, and one of the sisters was suffocated; another was frozen to death in the forest.

The winter after was still more severe, and at its close only four remained (who were not either blind or paralytic) out of all three of the united sisterhoods; nevertheless, it was determined to send them to Siberia to end their days there.

Had this intention been carried into effect, nothing would have transpired of all this history; but Almighty God designed that the world should know what schismatic barbarity can perpetrate: Mother Macrina, with three of her companions, at length effected their escape.

On the occasion of the protopope's fête, the whole of the inmates were intoxicated for three successive days. On the evening of the third day Mother Macrina found her guards asleep in their places; she passed them, and roused the three sisters who still retained the use of their limbs; they reached the top of the wall by the help of the trees, and, notwithstanding its height, after commending themselves to God, let themselves drop on the snow. When they found themselves all uninjured, transported with joy, they knelt down and recited the Te Deum. In order to baffle pursuit and to secure at least the escape of one to tell the tale, they separated, appointing to meet at a certain town on the frontier.

Mother Macrina pursued her difficult journey, or rather wanderings, amid the Lithuanian forests for three months, begging her way, beset with spies, and enduring the greatest extremities of cold, hunger, and thirst. From many persons she received great kindness, but the names have been carefully concealed, that they might not incur the vengeance of the Czar. At length she arrived

at the town where she was to meet the sisters, but only one was there—Sister Marsecka. At a later period she ascertained that the other two had reached Galicia. After eight days she set off, and, having crossed the frontier, crawling on her hands and feet among a herd of cattle, and so escaped the last Russian sentinel, she reached Posen in safety, where she only wished to live a retired and humble life of devotion; but the Archbishop obliged her to draw up a circumstantial account of her sufferings. Through the grand duchy of Posen she passed via Paris to Rome, where, by the command of the Pope, she dictated to three officials the startling history which her own humility would have concealed.

The Russian government has attempted to refute the whole story, and has had recourse for this end to the most contemptible subterfuges. But the Czar, when he visited His Holiness in 1845, was unable to deny to the face of the Vicar of Christ what he had not scrupled to deny in official documents; he was speechless, went out abashed and confounded from his presence.

Of the blind and paralytic sisters who were left behind, two died a few days after Mother Macrina's flight; and all the others were placed in a hospital, after a long resistance on the part of Siemaszko, who would only give his consent on the condition of their receiving communion once at least from the hands of a schismatic. At last he gave in, when he found he could not prevail, but he strictly charged the officers of the hospital never to let a Catholic priest have access to them.

This is the true history of one convent of Basilian nuns; but the whole order endured the same persecutions, and of the two hundred and forty-five religious of whom it was composed not one fell away. There is no reason to suppose that the government had any special hatred to this community, and, as all were as constant as they, it is probable that the story of the Nuns of Minsk is the story of every other convent of the Basilian order.

THE HOLY EXAMPLE OF ST. ANGELA.

Among the many holy women who have left an enduring impress on their time, and the results of whose labors have grown and spread, the name of St. Angela will always hold a conspicuous place. This saintly woman, from her earliest years, consecrated herself wholly to the service of God, and the good of humanity. She was born at Dezenzano, Italy, in the year 1511. From her childhood

she practised the most austere virtues, and finally embraced the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis. The Third Order is composed of persons who take only simple vows, and who may live privately in the world, but whose lives are devoted, so far as circumstances may permit, to charitable works, such as helping the poor, attending the sick, and other works of Christian charity.

In 1537, after having made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to Rome, she founded at Brescia an institute of women, the Ursuline Order, modelled on that of the Franciscan Tertiaries. Seventy-three young companions joined her in her holy work. St. Angela was chosen Superioress, and at her suggestion the institution was placed under the protection of St. Ursula, whence the designation of Ursulines.

Having seen her institute firmly established, she died in the odor of sanctity, March 21st, 1540. Pope Paul IV., four years subsequently, approved of the rules of the Order, under the title of the Company of St. Ursula. St. Charles Borromeo, then Archbishop of Milan, lent his powerful aid to the new institute, and it continued to grow in numbers and esteem, through its good works. His Holiness, Gregory XIII., and afterward Sixtus V. and Paul V., increased its privileges, and the Order that had begun under such humble conditions, for the purpose of stimulating the practice of Christian virtue among women in the various avocations of life, soon resolved itself into religious communities. Others of them remained in private life, fulfilling their avocations within their own sphere, in accordance with the intention of their saintly foundress; and their work to-day is recognized in Europe and America as among the most fruitful of the Church.

The work of St. Angela was destined in a short time to spread, take root, and flourish in other lands. The Order was introduced into France as early as 1574, by Françoise de Bermond, a pious woman of the city of Avignon. With a number of other young women she engaged in the work of the instruction of youth in her native city. For a time these young ladies lived separately, subject to the rules of the Order of St. Angela; but in 1596, at the instance of Father Cesar de Bus, they began to live in community in the town of Lille. Subsequently the pious foundress established other communities at Aix and Marseilles. Madame Acarie, now known as Blessed Mary of the Incarnation, introduced a community into Paris in 1604, whose first superioress was Mère de Bermond, who was called from Marseilles for that duty. At the instance of Madame

de Sainte-Beuve, widow of Claude le Rona de Sainte-Beuve, Counsellor of the Parliament of Paris, a lady of extraordinary virtue and piety, who furnished the community with support in its beginning, measures were adopted for converting this community into a monastery of cloistered nuns. Through the instrumentality of the fathers of the Society of Jesus and other religious, a petition embracing a plan to this end was addressed by Madame de Sainte-Beuve to Pope Paul V., who granted the necessary authorization in a bull dated June 13th, 1612. The institution, known as the Monastery of Paris, was to be under the rule of St. Augustin and subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese. Mother Françoise de Bermond, who desired to enter the religious life with the young community, was recalled by the Ursulines of Marseilles, leaving the Paris community under the charge of other religious who had temporarily assumed the duty of their instruction and guidance in their new departure. In 1623 the Ursulines elected their own superioress and assumed the full status of a religious community.

Another community was established by Mère Françoise de Bermond in 1610, at Lyons, which, in accordance with the desire of the Archbishop, was erected into a monastery by a bull of the Pope in 1620. From the Ursuline congregations of Lyons and Paris, many other monasteries spread, and within a brief period foundations of the Order extended outside of France. Other celebrated congregations of this Order were those of Toulouse and Bordeaux, the latter being especially remarkable as having extended to more lands than any of the others, embracing several countries in Europe and Canada. Others of note were that of Dijon, founded in 1619; Tulle, 1614; Arles, 1624; and that of the County of Burgundy, 1606. Not only do the various communities of Ursulines differ in their observances and constitutions, but also in their habit.

The rapid growth and success of this Order were in a large measure the outcome of the peculiar conditions of the time when it was instituted. Up to that period the religious communities of women were cloistered communities and took no share in the work of the outside world. The sisterhood founded by St. Angela, however, extended the sphere of their activity and usefulness by leading a religious life outside the cloister, in order to devote themselves to the instruction and education of youth. And when finally they adopted the enclosure, they did not renounce or abandon the needful and fruitful work of teaching. Indeed, they may be regarded as the pioneers in this great undertaking, the fountain whence issued the

many other religious communities engaged to-day in the all-important mission of educating and training Catholic youth throughout the world.

But nowhere can the daughters of St. Angela point to a prouder record than in the New World. Their first foundation on this continent dates from 1639, when Madame Madeline de la Peltrie, with three companions of the Order, one of them Marie Guyard, Sister Mary of the Incarnation, since beatified, landed at Quebec, and began their labors in the midst of the forest—Quebec then being merely a spot in the wilderness. Two years after her arrival, Madame de la Peltrie and her companions moved into the humble dwelling that served as the monastery, situated on the spot occupied by the Ursuline convent of Quebec to-day. There, indifferent to privations of every kind, subject to unceasing danger, and often discouraged and disappointed amid their labors, these heroic women toiled on. Twice was their humble convent destroyed by fire, but each time they resumed their task with redoubled energy and hope.

The results of their work in instructing, Christianizing, and civilizing the children of the forest were crowned with success from the outset. In 1647 a rule was drawn up for them by the sainted Jesuit martyr, Father Jerome Lallemant, which they observed until their affiliation with the Congregation of Paris, in 1682. For two centuries and a half that holy institution has taught the Canadian girls of all ranks and races to love Jesus and Mary. Their annals are full of instances of tender devotion to the Mother of God, and of her favors to the devout clients who sought her intercession.

Outside of French Canada, also, this community soon made its efforts known. The Ursulines at New Orleans were founded while the *fleur-de-lis* of France waved over the Mississippi from the Falls of St. Anthony to the Gulf of Mexico, and have since seen the flag of Spain, the Tricolor, the Stars and Stripes, the Confederate flag, and again the Stars and Stripes float over that city; and during all these changes, and amid all the peril and turbulence incident to such changes, the work of these devout sisters has been continued. The devotion to Our Lady of Prompt Succor or Speedy Help was inspired to a holy Ursuline nun in France, while she was praying for an enterprise in favor of Louisiana, which her bishop deemed impossible.

In 1812, shortly after this devotion was established in New Orleans, the city was threatened with an immense conflagration, which soon appeared inevitable. The flames advanced with fearful rapidity toward the Ursuline convent, at present the Archbishopric. Before

fleeing the danger, one of the sisters placed a small statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor facing the fire, and one of the venerable mothers, on her knees, exclaimed with great confidence: "Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to our assistance or we are lost!" Scarcely were the words pronounced, when the wind changed its direction; the city and the convent were saved.

On the 8th of January, 1815, great consternation reigned in New Orleans; the English attacked the city with fourteen thousand men and a formidable artillery. The American army were only three thousand, commanded by General Jackson, who was determined, in case of being vanquished, to set fire to the city, that the enemy might perish in the flames. The most painful anxiety prevailed, and the imploring crowd rushed into the Ursuline chapel, before the statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, which had been placed on the main altar. The nuns made a vow in her honor to obtain the victory, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered by Bishop Dubourg for the same intention, at the end of which a herald precipitately entered the chapel, exclaiming: "The victory is ours!" General Jackson visited the convent, and in touching terms thanked them for their piety and patriotism in imploring Providence in favor of the American arms.

The signal graces obtained since, through the intercession of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, are innumerable.

In 1846 a branch community of that of New Orleans was established at Galveston, Texas, and in 1824 a branch was organized in Boston by Sister St. George of Quebec. Ten years later, this monastery was laid in ashes by a fanatical mob of Know-Nothings, and was never re-established. In the same year the Ursulines were introduced into the diocese of Charleston by Bishop England, and branches were subsequently established in New York, Cleveland, St. Louis, and other places, where these devoted children of St. Angela perpetuate their mission of holiness and charitable and fruitful labors.

THE CAPTIVE PRIEST AMONG THE MOORS.

THERE is scarcely a more melancholy or a more romantic page of history than that which records the tale of King Sebastian's expedition into Africa in the year 1578. Had the enterprise been successful, it would perhaps have placed its leader among the foremost ranks of Christian heroes; and the poetry of Portugal might have immortalized him as the founder of his country's glory, instead of,

as now, connecting his name with the story of her ruin and disgrace. And surely, when the brilliant armament set sail that was intended to attack the Moors on their own soil, each vessel crowded with the flower of a young and chivalrous nobility, who were led by a king whose boyish ardor, for he was but twenty-three, urged him to this daring undertaking "that he might do somewhat for God and Portugal," the doubting hearts of his sage councillors, who were unanimous in dissuading him from the attempt, might well have been roused to something of his own high enthusiasm, as they saw the martial preparations of the Christian leaders, mingled with something of that religious character which betokened that the war was undertaken in defence of the Cross. Sebastian himself was not unworthy, in many ways, to be the chief of such an expedition. He was a warm, perhaps an extravagant admirer of those days of chivalrous glory which he rashly attempted to bring back when their time was past in Europe; his personal character, rash and headstrong as it was, had yet a generosity and frankness in it which endeared him to all who knew him. Even such men as Bartholomew of the Martyrs were forced to acknowledge the charm of the young king over their affections; and it was probably the very power and success of his influence, winning the hearts of men against their judgment, that proved his ruin, by enabling him to overcome the opposition of his advisers to the war which was to cost him his kingdom and his life.

We are not, however, about to enter into the details of the campaign, terminated as it was by a single battle, so bloody and terrible that it is said but fifty Portuguese survived the disastrous day; while the fate of Sebastian himself was sunk in an obscurity which long kept alive among his subjects the hope that they should see him return, and gave rise to similar legends concerning him as have been associated with the names of Roderic of the Goths and King Arthur. Our present interest with the gallant and unfortunate crews of those gay vessels, so proudly riding over the Atlantic in all the pomp and glitter of warlike display in the sixteenth century, is confined to one man, perhaps the least thought of among them all. Yet, if so, it was for no want of noble birth, for the Counts of Andrada belonged to one of the most illustrious houses of Portugal. But the knightly renown which had formed the most distinguished inheritance of his ancestors was little regarded by him of whom we speak, and who had joined the company of the army from a very different motive from any which stirred in the hearts of the hot-blooded combatants.

Mixing with the gay nobles and soldiery, in the coarse habit of the Austin Hermits, Father Thomas of Jesus thought but little of the worldly honors he had renounced, when fifteen years of age, to embrace his present life; his business among them was, as he said, to nurse the sick and tend the wounded. But this did but conceal another design, which lay at the bottom of his heart, and which some may think to have rivalled that of the king in romance and Quixotism. The Christian slaves who were groaning out their lives in the Moorish dungeons were often subjected to such hard and terrible sufferings that many were induced to renounce their faith and purchase an easier life at the price of conformity to Mahometan unbelief. Father Thomas had formed the resolution to join them, since he could not release them, that, sharing in their sufferings, he might strengthen them in the faith and preserve them from the terrible danger of apostasy. He was therefore in the army of Sebastain, to whom he was singularly dear, with the fixed determination in his soul to be taken captive, and voluntarily to embrace that life whose terrors were best attested by the long succession of military orders founded for the express purpose of its relief. Nevertheless, during the time of his presence with the army he was not idle, but devoted himself, and successfully, to the prevention of disorders, while his daily occupation was found among the sick. In the fatal engagement which destroyed all the hopes of the unhappy monarch, Father Thomas might be seen exposed to the hottest of the fire, assisting the fallen and encouraging the soldiers to valor in the cause of the Cross. While doing so, an arrow struck him in the shoulder, and, being seized by the enemy, he was carried away with a crowd of other prisoners, and soon after sold to a marabout, or what we might call a Mahometan monk or religious. This man was a fanatic in his own religion, and at first treated his prisoner with indulgence, in the hopes to win him by gentle means to the abjuration of his faith; but the scorn with which Father Thomas treated all such overtures so enraged him that he condemned him to the treatment bestowed on the lowest slaves, and threw him into a horrible dungeon, where he daily received most cruel beatings, was almost starved, and was dragged during the hottest of the day to labor in the mines. In this miserable manner he continued to live, consoling himself in his sufferings by continual contemplation of those of his Lord.

If we look into the dungeon of Father Thomas, we might see the making of a book, which, though it has no claim to rank its author

among the great names, has at least a world-wide reputation in its own way, and has found a home in almost every language. Chained to his damp, cold floor, with the walls and roof of his prison so low and narrow that he can neither stand upright nor lie at full length, the prisoner of Christ writes by the light of a single ray of sunshine that finds its way through the breathing-hole in the wall above his head. And what is his subject? If he were a poet, he would be writing of his own sufferings, thinly veiled, it may be, under the imaginary sufferings of another; but he is nothing but a friar and a Christian, and his words are of the "Sufferings of Christ." It is a remarkable feature of this well-known work that, from the first page to the last, there is not a word of the author himself. He had learnt in religion the sublime lesson of self-forgetfulness while absorbed in the contemplation of God; and it is only when reading the chapter wherein he so touchingly describes the awful night when the world's Redeemer was lying in the Jewish dungeon, watching for the first dawn of that day which should announce to Him that the hour of His last victory was at hand, and where he paints with so life-like a tenderness the bitterness that filled that Heart which man had abandoned, and from which even God had, as it were, hidden His face, that we remember that the writer was himself stricken of God and forsaken of all men,—a prisoner, and in chains, suffering stripes, and spitting, and reproach,—and that he had but to draw from the shame and the suffering that made up his daily life when he wanted the materials for the sublime picture with which he has presented us. And yet none of these things did he seem to count as sufferings. For days they left him without food, and when nature was sinking under exhaustion, his brutal persecutors would order him to the mines; and yielding them as gentle and willing an obedience as though in his beloved convent of "Our Lady of Grace," he would drag his manacled limbs to his weary work, and answer their blows and reproaches with a sweet and happy smile. But if the torture of the body had no power to disturb the peace and tranquillity of his soul, the apostasies and sufferings of his fellow-captives often moved his heart to anguish, while he had little or no opportunity of encouraging them by his presence and support. At length the arrival in Morocco of Don Francesco d'Acosta, the ambassador whom the King had sent to negotiate the ransom of some of the Portuguese captives, effected some change in his position. He was removed to Morocco and placed with a Christian merchant—nay, he might even have remained with some of the Portuguese nobility

who were awaiting their ransom, and who were treated with a certain indulgence and respect; but nothing was farther from the thoughts of Father Thomas than a life of ease or the hopes of liberty.

"Your excellency," he said to Don Francesco, "has, I know, a kind intention; but so long as I am here, my health will never mend."

"You are thinking of the orange-groves and gardens of our own Portugal," replied the ambassador. "Take courage, good father. In a few weeks, if God will, the ransoms will arrive, and you shall get back health and strength in the cloisters of Our Lady of Grace."

Thomas smiled gently. "I believe it will not be there God will restore my strength," he said; "my resting-place and hospital is nearer at hand, and if your excellency's influence is powerful enough to obtain me that favor I might remove there even now."

"And where is that?" asked D'Acosta. "I know of no house where you have a better chance of rest and kind nursing than that where you now are. There are not many hospitals for Christian slaves in the town of Morocco."

"But there are prisons," replied Thomas; "and it is the Sagena that I am thinking of, and where, I pray you, if you wish me kindly, to have me speedily conveyed."

"The Sagena!" exclaimed the ambassador, with amazement; "why, it is the worst of all the wretched holes which these dogs of infidels have invented for our unhappy brethren. Its very air is pestilence, and it must surely be as a quick road to heaven that your reverence can think of such a resting-place; or, perhaps it was indeed the grave you spoke of as your hospital-bed."

"Not so, my lord," answered Thomas, "for it would ill beseem one of my habit either to fear death or to court it, apart from the will of God. A religious man, indeed, can never be in love with life, or afraid of dying; but still he lives or dies of obedience, and not of self-will. I spoke but what I meant when I said that in the Sagena only shall I be restored to health. Your easy homes and gentle treatment will but quicken my disease, for I am not sent for this, but for a work which abides no delay."

In vain did D'Acosta try every argument to dissuade him from the design on which he had set his heart. Nothing availed to turn him from his purpose, and in a short time he was removed to the Sagena, where, wholly employed in the service of his unfortunate companions, he did indeed, as he had foretold, rapidly recover

strength, in the midst of privations and sufferings hardly to be described.

When we remember the horrible state in which even the Christian prisons of Europe were to be found only at the early part of the last century, and then remind ourselves that the dungeons of the Sagena were expressly arranged for the torment and prolonged agony of the unhappy victims of Moorish cruelty and superstition, we may picture to ourselves something of that suffering, voluntarily and cheerfully embraced by this heroic man, only that he might bring comfort and encouragement to his companions. He had no small difficulties to encounter in his efforts to be of any use to them; for, taken from all classes, the Christian slaves were for the most part men of rude and licentious habits, and the Sagena too often presented scenes of a worse character than simple suffering.

Abandoned to despair, some took refuge in the miserable pleasure which was to be found in petty gambling or the forgetfulness of intoxication. Others were sunk in a gloomy lethargy, from which it was hard to rouse them; and many, unable to endure the burden of this life, had openly apostatized from the faith, and were living in ease and comfort under the turban of the renegade. It was not in the Sagena, where they were watched by a thousand jealous eyes, that Thomas was able to find an opportunity of addressing them. To do this he had to seize the intervals of their work, either in the mines or in the fields; and little by little he so far gained their confidence as to induce them to assemble every day during the scanty moments allowed for rest in the middle of the day, when the burning rays of the African sun rendered work impossible even for a slave. He summoned them to him by the ringing of a little bell, and they never failed to come. At first he spoke to them only of their suffering, but, gradually winning them by the expression of a sympathy to which they had long been strangers, he was able to get them to listen to him while he exhorted them to resignation and a firm faith, and called on them, if they were indeed willing to suffer for the cross of Christ, to come and kiss the sacred symbol, which he displayed before their eyes. What a sight was that! Ten or twenty years had passed over the heads of many since last their eyes had rested on the crucifix: What recollections of their Christian homes, and the churches and cities, the olive-hills and convent-bells of Spain; what thoughts of a lost innocence, and of the days when, with the sinless hearts of children, they learnt the name of Jesus from a mother's lips! Thomas had gained his first victory over

their hearts when he found and opened within them the source of tears, and he no longer hesitated to use his power for their reform as well as for their consolation. Before long the horrible dungeons of the Sagena presented a totally different character; the time was regularly divided for different exercises, marked by the sound of the little bell, which called the inmates to prayers, instruction, or various employments with which he induced them to supply the place of the low amusements that had formerly been their only occupation and resource. The prison assumed the air of a religious house, and Father Thomas, presiding over every department, preventing every disorder, and reconciling every difference, became the father of all; and was accustomed to beg about among those who were a little better provided than the others, in order that, with the trifling alms he was able to collect, he might relieve the sufferings of the sick or more indigent among them. In short, he had found his vocation, and the Sagena had found its apostle. The desolate wilderness of that shocking prison began to blossom like the rose, and, as the flowers of faith and hope revived among its inmates, the fruits also of charity ripened in their time. Four years thus passed away, the Sagena was becoming evangelized, and many among the Christian renegades had been recalled from their apostasy and even suffered martyrdom for the faith; but meanwhile the captivity of Father Thomas was bitterly felt by his relations and his Order. Their efforts on his behalf were unceasing, and while his sister, the Countess of Linares, strained her utmost efforts to collect the sum necessary for his ransom, King Philip II. of Spain, by means of his ambassador at Morocco, constantly treated with the authorities for his release.

One day, on returning from his daily labors among the slaves employed in the mines, he was not a little surprised to find the marabout to whose service he was attached waiting to receive him with a certain air of respect and consideration. "You are free," were his first words, "and may go where you list; your ransom has been offered and accepted, and so the hospitality of the Sagena need no longer be forced on you."

Father Thomas received the intelligence with a bewildered air. "Free!" he exclaimed at length; "and where am I to go?"

"By the prophet, that is a strange question for a captive," said the marabout; "I doubt not it would find a ready enough answer with others of these Christian dogs who defile our land, and who babble to us so often of their country and their homes. And if you," he added, "have forgotten yours, this letter may chance to remind you of it;"

and so saying, he placed a letter in his hands. Father Thomas took it and glanced over its contents. It was from his sister, and written with all the warmth of an affectionate disposition, welcoming him back to his recovered freedom, and dwelling on the thought of their meeting and the happy days once more before him. It touched every string that could rouse his hopes and aspirations for a glorious future. There was his Order, wherein he still held so distinguished a name; the favor of the king, and the celebrity won by his late labors and sufferings for the faith—fame and friendship alike were waiting for him; and if he had, perhaps, thought himself during the last four years a stranded and forgotten man, the full tide of the world's fortunes was once more rolling to his feet. Yet Father Thomas turned from it with a heavy heart. "And my captive brethren," he murmured to himself; "what is to become of them! What claim has Portugal or the world on one who left his home to become a slave, and has found the thing he came for? The world does well enough without me, and I better still without the world; but in the Sagena I have children, and they have none but me."

"If you desire to answer the letter," interrupted the marabout, as Father Thomas pursued these reflections and seemed so lost in thought as scarcely to be aware of his presence, "there is an opportunity of presently dispatching a reply. An envoy departs for Europe this evening, and you may either write, or, if it suit you better, I doubt not you could accompany him, for, as I guess, your luggage is not great."

"I will write," replied Father Thomas, rousing himself from his reverie; "and I will only pray you to tell me one thing. This ransom of which you speak is certain to be paid, but it is no great matter to you what captive it redeems."

"The ransom is a large one," answered the marabout, "but the followers of Islam act not from caprice in these matters, and for such a sum as the thousand gold crowns promised by the king's ambassador they are bound to release one of your dignity, or two of inferior rank; for the Christians, we are told, value their priests at double the price of their citizens. The thousand crowns is a priest's ransom, and you are the only priest in the Sagena; the wrath of Allah hath long since fallen on the others, the last of whom watered the sands of Morocco with his blood some seven weeks ago, giving glory to the prophet by his death, as he had blasphemed him during his life."

"I am the only priest, but not the only captive," said Father

Thomas eagerly; "and what I would ask of you is this: the thousand crowns are yours, but leave it to me to send back to Europe the Christian blood purchased in exchange. You shall have the bargain whole and entire, according to your own estimate. Is it agreed?"

"As you will," said the Moor, "though I scarcely guess your meaning. We take the money and we agree to send its worth, and there is no room for fraud or trickery, for the captives ransomed are delivered to your envoy by our own officers. Have it as you will, however; the gold will be paid this evening into the sheriff's hands, and he will come here immediately afterward to receive from the captain of the Sagena the slave who is to be released. You see there is no possibility of evasion, if the thought of such a thing has suggested itself."

"I have no such thought," replied Father Thomas; "let the sheriff come, and he shall find me ready. Meanwhile, I will busy myself with the letter."

The marabout was gone, and the Christian captive sat down to write. If there had been a moment's struggle in his heart, there was no evidence of it on his cheek or brow, and almost without pause or hesitation he wrote the following lines:

"A thousand thanks, my sister, for your goodness in thinking of me and for the sacrifice you have made to enable me to return to you; but that return is impossible. I am not half so desolate and badly off as you may think. I have the happiness of being the only priest in this country, and so my presence here is well-nigh necessary for the salvation of these poor people, whom I am able to support amid the sufferings of their wretched life. I cannot therefore leave them, and shall not return to Europe. Why should I? Have I not long since renounced the ties of family and society? Were I necessary to you, I should be with you; but you know well I can be of little use to you. Remember me in your prayers, and do not cease to love me; for indeed I love and pray for you. I will, however, accept your offer of the ransom, not for myself, but for two poor Christian slaves, who are in a far more miserable position than I am, and about to abandon their faith in despair of regaining their liberty. You shall be the means of procuring it for them, and they shall owe to you the happiness of returning to their families and their God."

On the following Saturday a little group stood on the quay outside the town, apparently engaged in watching the movements of a Spanish merchantman in the harbor, busily preparing to weigh her anchor and hoist sail for the European coast. Father Thomas was

in the midst, and gathered about him were several of the captives of the Sagena; a little boat lay waiting at the foot of the pier to receive the released prisoner, but it was not Father Thomas who descended into it.

"Farewell, my children," he said to two of those who stood by his side. "God has sent you liberty, to use for Him and for His glory. Carry back to Spain the memory of His mercies, and when you hear the welcome of your home-voices, forget not the brethren you have left behind."

A minute after and the little boat was making its way to the vessel, bearing on board the two ransomed captives, while their deliverer stood where he had left them and watched them with a beating heart. Rousing himself with a powerful effort, he turned back to the Sagena, to give comfort to those who needed it even more than himself.

The fourth year of his captivity, as it drew to its close, found his sufferings greatly increased. Not only were his own labors severer under a new master to whom he was consigned, but he had the additional affliction of seeing many ready to fall away from their faith, unable to endure the hardships of their condition, and his own rigorous imprisonment prevented his doing all he desired in protecting and encouraging them in their danger. These combined sufferings of mind and body were too much for his strength, which rapidly gave way, and the austerities which he practised during the Lent of that year had their share in increasing the malady which devoured him. Still, not a day passed without his preaching to those whom he could collect around him, and it was during the closing scenes of his life that we are told he completed those chapters on the last sufferings of Christ, which perhaps owe their sublimity to the sorrow in which they were composed.

Holy Week was at hand, and, as it seemed, the servant was to follow his Master even to the very time of his decease; for none thought he could live over Good Friday, on which day Don Francis of Acosta, the Portuguese ambassador, succeeded in gaining admittance to him. Believing him to be dying, he determined to stay with him to the last, but Father Thomas would not hear of his doing so.

"You are mistaken," he whispered, as the ambassador bent over his miserable bed, "for I shall live to see another Easter sun, and to finish the work which God has given me to do."

And indeed, contrary to all probability, he continued to survive

until the Monday of the following week, when a momentary restoration of strength and energy seemed given to him. He felt it, and knew its purpose.

"Those miserable men who were about to take the turban," he said to one of his fellow-captives who attended him—"is it too late? Call them, wherever they are, for I must see them before I die."

"Do you speak of the Spanish renegades, father?" said his companion. "Alas, it is too late. They have not yet publicly renounced their faith, but their design is to do so this very day. All men cannot suffer as you have done."

"They have not yet renounced their faith?" repeated Thomas; "then, I charge you, bring them here, for I have a message for them ere I go. And tarry not too long, for the time is very short."

A few moments sufficed to bring the slaves he spoke of to his presence, and, as the news spread through the Sagena that Father Thomas was dying, all the inmates hurried to his little cell, that they too might catch his last words and receive his blessing. There he was, lying on his heap of straw; the Easter sun, of which he spoke, struggling through the narrow hole above his head on a face pale and emaciated by sickness, but beautiful with the peace that passeth knowledge and the faith that saw far over the grave that was waiting for him. He caused them to raise him in his bed, and his eyes grew bright and his voice firm and clear as he spoke to the trembling renegades who stood before him.

"You will leave Jesus Christ, my children," he said, "because you are tired of your slavery; well, listen to my words and think if I have ever deceived you. In eight days your ransom will arrive, and you will be free; persevere till then, and cast not your souls into a worse bondage than the chain of the Moslems. And for you," he added, turning to the others, "there is nothing but my blessing, and that is little worth the giving. Be of good heart; there is a better home than Spain waiting for us, and the ransom has long since been paid."

They crowded round him, kneeling as he blessed them, and sobbing like children over his outstretched hands. Dark and miserable as was the dying cell, it was filled with a wonderful and solemn beauty at that moment; and there was one looking on to whom its teaching was a revelation of faith. Leaning against the open doorway, concealed from view, the Mahometan marabout was watching the death-scene of his slave. He saw the Christian faith creating strength out of weakness and illuminating a dungeon with the ra

diance of its glorious hope. As the feeble daylight gleamed over the features of Father Thomas, he could mark his upturned gaze, as though he met the welcoming look of One whose greeting was more than the greeting of a home. He saw those also who knelt around, their lips moving in prayer, their hands tracing that mystic sign which seemed to give so strange a courage and endurance to these suffering men; and the grace of God came down to give the last glory to His servant by the conversion of a soul. In another minute the marabout was kneeling with the others, and as he kissed the feet of his dying slave he exclaimed: "My father, I, too, am a Christian; I can believe in no God but yours, and before the sun sets I wish to receive the baptism of faith."

The saint raised his head and murmured a blessing. "My God, I thank Thee," were the last words he uttered, and with them he expired. It was even by his death-bed that his master received the rite of baptism, and in later years a Carmelite convent was raised over the scene of his long and glorious martyrdom of charity. His death took place on the 7th of April, 1582, and eight days after his last prophecy was completed, and the ransom of the Spanish captives arrived as he had foretold.

THE LOYALTY OF A CONFESSOR OF THE FAITH DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

*Related by Himself.**

On the 20th of March I was arrested at Vernon, my native parish. I had then only received the tonsure, and had lived in retirement at my father's house since April 1st, 1791. The National Assembly was at that time endeavoring to establish a schism in France, by requiring of all bishops and priests who were engaged in the active

* At the age of twenty-five, being then only in minor orders, M. Leproust quitted the seminary and the town of Tours, in order that he might not be present at the installation of Michael Suzor, formerly parish priest of Loches, but who had now been nominated constitutional bishop of the department of Indre-et-Loire. Having refused to assist at this installation, M. Leproust refused also to hold any further communication with the curé of his parish, who had taken the oath. Accordingly, in the month of March, 1793, he was arrested, and condemned to transportation for this breach of the law; he was taken to Bordeaux in order to be embarked for French Guiana, and with this expectation he was detained for two years at Bordeaux, at Blaye, and upon the hulks. The history of this captivity he has written, and we here lay a sketch of it before our readers, not doubting but that they will find in its simple and touching recital much that will both interest and edify them.

performance of their functions that they should take an oath to support the civil constitution of the clergy, which the Assembly had decreed and which one hundred and thirty-two bishops had rejected; which, moreover, Pope Pius VI., by a brief of the 10th of March, 1793, had condemned as heretical and contrary to the general discipline of the Church. I had determined to take no part in the schism; nevertheless, they had no just pretext for calling upon me to take the oath, since I was not exercising any ministerial functions and was not even in holy orders. Being denounced, however, by six citizens of the village—the number required by law to authorize the transportation of any obnoxious ecclesiastic—I was arrested on the charge of being dangerous to the Republic, inasmuch as I would hold no communication with the curé of Vernon, who had had the weakness to conform to the oath and to submit to the intruded bishop; that see being, in the mean while, lawfully occupied by the archbishop, M. Conzié, and having been so occupied ever since the year 1785.

The authorities of Vernon examined my papers and books, but found nothing contrary to the laws of the state; nevertheless, having drawn up a legal statement of my case, they sent me to Tours under the escort of ten national guards. These men, being men of my own village, with whom I was personally acquainted, treated me very well; they even defended me from several persons who were disposed to insult me. By and by two men chose to attach themselves to our company and go along by our side, vomiting forth the most violently abusive language. On our arrival at the bridge in Tours, these two ruffians began to cry out that it was useless to take me any farther, and that it would be better to throw me at once into the river; they even endeavored themselves to force me over the parapet. My guards had to use some exertion in my defence, in order that they might fulfil the order they had received of bringing me before the committee of inspection. It was the evening of Palm Sunday, and there was a considerable crowd upon the bridge and upon the open space in front of the town-hall. This crowd joined in the cry of the men, and menacing vociferations began to arise on all sides, the most frequent of which was, "Here comes another for the guillotine!" M. Barbier, curé of St. Georges, had passed by the same route some minutes before, conducted like myself by the national guards of his parish, and had met with the same reception. It was not without difficulty that I was saved from being very roughly handled by the crowd which filled the Rue Neuve and the house

where the members of the revolutionary committee were then sitting. A number of young men followed me almost into the presence of these worthies, crying out, "To the guillotine!" and, adding significant gestures to their words, they even went so far as to mark upon my neck the place where the knife ought to strike.

When brought before the revolutionary committee, I was first of all examined as to the causes which had prevented my assisting two years before, when a student at the seminary, at the installation of the intruded bishop. I answered that my conscience forbad me to do so, inasmuch as, there being already an archbishop who had been canonically instituted, I could not recognize another. I expected that for this answer I should be sent to prison, thence to be dispatched to the guillotine; they contented themselves, however, with ordering me to a place of confinement, which proved to be no other than my old seminary. There I had the honor and the joy to find myelf in company with more than a hundred venerable priests, imprisoned on account of their refusal to take the sacrilegious oath, and their constancy in maintaining the unchangeable truths of our holy religion; and these priests were still permitted to say Mass within the house. In this way I had the precious privilege of being able to indemnify myself, as it were, for the long time I had passed in my own village without being able to assist at the divine mysteries even on Sundays and on the great festivals.

But this happiness and tranquillity were not of long continuance. The members of the directory of the department, wishing to exhibit the fervor of their patriotism, began to increase the rigor of the decrees of the convention; so that, whereas that body had sentenced to transportation only those non-juring priests who were in good health and had not yet reached the age of sixty, the department of Indre-et-Loire determined to extend this condemnation to those who were seventy. The magistrate who came to announce this decree to us assembled us on the terrace of the seminary and addressed us in these words: "Whereas you have not chosen to take the oath, and whereas you are men dangerous to the republic, whose laws you despise, your country declares to you, by my mouth, that she vomits you forth forever from her bosom; your sentence is, that you be transported to French Guiana." Having bowed to him, we returned to our rooms, and those among us who had not attained the age of seventy or had no serious infirmity commenced our preparations for departure. The day was fixed for the 22d of April. We hired, at our own cost, some carts to take us to Bordeaux, and at eight o'clock

in the morning they were drawn up in the court of the seminary. There were eighteen of them, and ninety-four ecclesiastics were to find places in them—seventy-four from the diocese of Tours and twenty from the dioceses of Blois and Le Mans. A national guard of horse and foot had been ordered to accompany us. We had great difficulty in getting out of the town, for the streets were crowded by ill-disposed persons, who did their best to prevent our departure, crying out continually, "To the guillotine! to the guillotine! Transportation is too merciful a punishment for them; they deserve to die!" At last the officer who had the charge of us ordered the soldiers to draw their swords, and so a passage was cleared, through which we passed on, amid an abundant shower of stones from all sides. We proceeded at full gallop as far as Grammont, where we halted to bind up the wounds which five-and-twenty of us had received, some from stones and some from bayonets. Our escort behaved pretty well, except that one of the national guards, hearing one of our party address another as "sir," became perfectly furious and threatened to kill him for using a forbidden title, instead of addressing his companion as "citizen." He actually levelled his musket at him three times, but another guard, more humane and less touchy, prevented the ruffian from doing any real injury, and when the officer was informed of it, he removed the offended soldier to another post.

Our first night was spent at Sainte-Maure, where the authorities lodged us in the cellars of the old salt-magazines, which they humanely furnished with fresh straw for us to lie upon. We were not insulted either on our arrival or on our departure from this place, and our journey the next day passed quietly enough, excepting that we were not allowed to refresh ourselves by walking occasionally instead of riding. When we arrived within half a league of Chatellerault, we were met by the authorities and national guard of the town, who conducted us to the prison through a dense but silent crowd. Here we were placed in a lofty hall, from which the ordinary criminals had been removed to make way for us, but as the straw had not been changed, the dust was so intolerable that, instead of sleeping, we were consumed with thirst all night long and continually asking for water. The jailer apparently had not even taken the trouble to lock up the thieves, but, mixing themselves among the servants of the prison, they contrived to steal several articles from some of our party while the surgeons were attending to their wounds. The next morning the national guard of Chatellerault took the place

of that of Tours, and these treated us with greater kindness, allowing us to leave the carriages when we liked, and to walk by their sides as friends. At Poictiers we were decently lodged in the old Convent of the Visitation; and as part of the national guard of this town was in Vendée, that of Chatellerault continued to guard us, and escorted us also the following day to Couhé, a little Protestant town, where we spent the night in an old ruined castle, of which only the walls were standing. Fifty men of the national guard of Couhé were ordered to escort us the next day, and our charitable guards of Chatellerault took their leave therefore; fifteen of them, however, accompanied us as far as Ruffec, fearing lest our new guards, being all Protestants, should maltreat us. This proved to be a special mark of God's care for us, for when we arrived at Ruffec we found it was the eve of a great fair; the place was full of people, and our Protestant guards insisted upon it that we should be taken to the principal square and made to kiss the tree of liberty there. Six gendarmes, however, who had been appointed to accompany us from Poictiers to Bordeaux, sided with our guards of Chatellerault in resisting this proposition; and finally, placing themselves at the head of the troop, they declared they would fight rather than allow us to be thus gratuitously exposed to the insults of the populace. The Protestants, therefore, relinquished their design and allowed our kind friends to conduct us through the less frequented parts of the town to certain inns, where we were quartered instead of being put in prison.

The national guard of Ruffec also treated us very well; but in the afternoon, when we arrived at Angoulême, there was a great assemblage of people, who made us get down from our carriages and proceed on foot to the prison, using toward us the most opprobrious and scoffing language. In the prison, too, we were obliged to lie upon the floor, without either mattress or straw. At Barbezieux, however, we were lodged in a loft of the castle of La Rochefoucauld, which was stripped of its furniture and uninhabited. But the people of the town, being good Catholics, would not let us lie upon the boards; they brought us mattresses, feather-beds, blankets and sheets, excellent bread, and all other necessary provisions. These good people did their utmost to evince the compassion they felt for us, and the next day, as we were leaving, surrounded our carriages with tears in their eyes. At length, after journeying on for another day or two, we arrived at the post of La Bastide, on the Garonne. Here we embarked upon some lighters, and remained there in the

open air all night, expecting to be landed the next day at Bordeaux So many priests, however, had arrived there from different dioceses, condemned like ourselves to transportation, that the authorities there refused to receive us, and sent us on to Blaye, a little town upon the Gironde, seven leagues from Bordeaux. At Blaye we were received with hisses and insults, and were conducted by the national guard to the strong and extensive citadel, situated on a considerable eminence. The rooms of the prison in which we were shut up were large enough, but we were packed in them like a flock of sheep and obliged to sleep on the boards without mattresses or blankets. Every evening the officers of the garrison came, with drawn swords in their hands, to count our numbers and see that no one was missing, but they did not insult us. Divine Providence, which never ceased to watch over us, interfered to take us away from Blaye sooner than we expected, thereby delivering us from the greatest danger we had yet encountered. A regiment of twelve hundred men, destined for Vendée, arrived at Blaye on Ascension Day (6th of May), and were allowed to enter the citadel for the purpose of seeing it. Among the two hundred men who composed our garrison these soldiers found some comrades, from whom they learned that we were priests who had been seized with arms in our hands in La Vendée. Not one of us, indeed, had ever set foot there; but this report was constantly circulated concerning all the arrested priests, in order to make them odious to the people. These soldiers then assembled at eight o'clock in the evening before the prison, and began to discuss among themselves the question of our execution. It so happened, however, that the directory of the department of the Gironde was Federalist—that is to say, they were opposed to the bloody tyranny of that portion of the Convention which was called the Mountain, and of which the two brothers Robespierre were the heads; and as they knew that the department of Indre-et-Loire had gone beyond the law with respect to us by condemning sexagenarians and others still older, they sent two commissioners to Blaye with orders to receive the complaints of any of the imprisoned clergy. One of these gentlemen was the son of a surgeon of Tours, and consequently rejoiced at this opportunity of seeing his countrymen; the other was a citizen of Blaye. They happened to have fixed on Ascension Day for their visit, and this circumstance was the means of saving our lives; for while they, in the company of the mayor and another official, the constitutional curé of the parish, were interrogating each one of us separately as to any appeal we might have to make on the

subject of our condemnation, the twelve hundred soldiers assembled in front of the prison were shouting and threatening violence, the priests meanwhile hearing each other's confessions and preparing for the worst. At the very time that I was with the commissioners, both they and I being quite ignorant of the disturbance that was going on around, the jailer entered to announce that he could hold out no longer; that the soldiers insisted upon having the prisoners given up to them, and that they were about to burst open the doors. The commissioners, the mayor, and the curé all behaved very well, promised to protect us, and rushing out into the midst of these furious ruffians exclaimed, "My friends, what atrocity is this that you are going to perpetrate? These priests are not from La Vendée; they are from the department of Tours, and have been sent here to be embarked for French Guiana, a place of transportation; they have submitted to the law which condemned them, and you, soldiers, ought to respect the law and to protect and defend those whom it punishes, not to insult and injure them." God, who destined us for more protracted sufferings, enabled these men to succeed in calming the volunteers; they were got out of the citadel and the next day removed from Blaye. But certainly, if the commissioners had not come on that day, they would have found nothing but our corpses.

The mayor, not considering that the two hundred and fifty soldiers who still remained in the citadel were very much better or more trustworthy than their companions whom he had succeeded in ejecting, determined on sending us to Bourg, a little town on the Dordogne. A numerous national guard was summoned to escort us to the port, where ten lighters were waiting for us. While we were still on the quay the soldiers saw us, and immediately quitting their exercise, spite of the prohibition of their officers, they rushed down upon us like madmen. Fortunately they had no arms, but they hurled a shower of stones at us, by which several of the national guards were struck. During this tumult we were hurried on board; several aged priests fell from the narrow planks which we had to cross into the water, which caused some delay, so that the stones reached us also, and they did not cease till we were fairly launched.

Bourg is the native place of the illustrious St. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola; and the kind hospitality with which we were received there made us think that the inhabitants had inherited the charity of their saintly countryman. On our arrival in the evening we were conducted to an old Ursuline convent, entirely dismantled; but the people brought us beds, mattresses, chairs, furniture, and all the food

we required. We slept two and two in the nuns' cells, and felt ourselves, as it were, in another world, in a terrestrial paradise.

There was one among the municipal corporation of Bourg, an impious republican surgeon, who formed a plot for our murder. All the neighborhood of Bordeaux is given up to the cultivation of the vine and the peasants grow no corn; consequently they are obliged to come every Sunday into the towns to buy bread. This surgeon then persuaded the vine-dressers that our presence in the place would raise the price of bread, and thus expose them to the danger of starvation. He inflamed their passions by means of these representations, so that they agreed to assemble on Whitsunday, to the number of near three thousand, in order to burst open the doors of the convent and massacre us. The mayor of Bourg, who was a good Christian, and two of whose uncles were priests who had refused to take the oath, discovered this plot, but was conscious that he had no means to hinder its execution, inasmuch as all the guard he had at his disposal for our defence did not amount to more than a dozen old soldiers. He came to arouse us, therefore, at midnight on the eve of Whitsunday, and begged us to make all preparations for embarking as quickly as possible, for that he should be in despair if any harm should happen to us. We descended the Gironde to Blaye, where the municipal authorities, fearing to expose us to the dangers we had already incurred there, sent us over to the Fort Pâti. Here we were lodged in damp, dark rooms, to which light was admitted only through small slits in walls fifteen feet thick, and which were full of rats, mice, and fleas. They gave us the same bread as was distributed to the soldiers—a mixture of bran and flour. They gave us also military beds, sheets, and blankets, which had evidently been used for soldiers suffering from the itch, for several of our number were presently attacked with this malady. Fortunately there was a pretty large bundle of hay here, whereby we were enabled to raise our mattresses from the damp ground. However, spite of these disadvantages, we enjoyed here very tolerable tranquillity; the detachment of soldiers who guarded us behaved with kindness; we were allowed to walk about upon the island when it was not covered by the tide, which happened at the times of the new and full moon; we performed our devotional exercises together and even held ecclesiastical conferences, in which M. Rabotteau, canon of St. Gatien, and M. Simon, canon of St. Martin, were the most skilful and interesting disputants. The consolation of hearing or of saying Mass, however, we did not enjoy.

Those among us who had completed their sixtieth year were now sent back to their several departments, according to the law, which enjoined imprisonment only in their case, not transportation. The sick also were next removed to Bordeaux, to the former convent of the Carmelites, so that in the month of September we were only twenty-eight left at Pâti. The popular commissioner of Bordeaux continued to treat us with humanity, and would not let us, therefore, pass the winter on the island. They brought us to Bordeaux, where we were first examined at the hospitals by the physicians, and those of us who had the itch were properly treated. Those who were in good health were removed to the fort of Hâ. But at the end of a fortnight came yet another change.

Tallien and Isabeau, the representatives of the people, had succeeded in causing the party of Robespierre to triumph at Bordeaux; they replaced the members of the popular commission by the partisans of the Mountain. The National Convention had just promulgated a new decree, whereby all non-juring priests who should not deliver themselves up in ten days were ordered to be guillotined within twenty-four hours after their arrest, together with all the persons in the house where they might be seized. The wise members of the Bordeaux Commission imagined that this decree had reference to all non-juring priests, and condemned them all to death; consequently they transferred us to another tower, where we were confined in rooms almost dark, crowded together, with nothing but the boards to lie upon; and at first they even left us for twenty-four hours without food or water, saying that there was no use in feeding us, since we were condemned to death. But God was not unmindful of us. Opposite the tower in which we were confined there was a very high house, inhabited by a good Catholic, the father of six children. This man had a priest concealed in his house, who said Mass every day. At a given signal we used to mount upon the platform, and, the windows of the upper story of the house of this courageous servant of God being opened, we were able, in spite of our jailers, to unite ourselves to the Holy Sacrifice which was being celebrated before our eyes. We here found abundantly the strength and consolation of which we had need.

During our two months' sojourn at Bordeaux, the room of the prison over our own was occupied by Federalists, for the most part worthy people of the town, who had endeavored to take no part in the tyranny of the two Robespierres. Among these gentlemen was the lord of one of the parishes of Medoc, named De Vormesel. He

had been a member of the popular commission, and had been found concealed in the house of the constitutional curé. When brought to prison he was placed in our room, because the other was too full. He was a deist and philosopher, and maintained that all religions were equally good. He used to compare them to forms of dress, saying that each people was free to choose that which seemed best to them; for that God paid no more attention to differences of worship than to changes of fashion, and that, provided He was served and adored, He took no heed to the particular manner in which this might be done.

All of us, both priests and Federalists, were in expectation of the same fate—the guillotine was everything we had in prospect; but while the priests, under these circumstances, preserved perfect tranquillity and an evenness of temper not unmixed with gayety, the Federalist prisoners were plunged in sadness and profound despair, and only thought of escaping the scaffold by poison. M. de Vormesel brooded over these frightful thoughts continually, as he walked in a gloomy and abstracted state of mind up and down our room. He used to say that he could not understand our calmness and peace of mind; but I explained to him that it arose from the very cause of our imprisonment. Contending for the true religion of Jesus Christ, we could desire nothing better or more noble than to die in such a cause. Our divine Master having assured us that those who generously give up their lives and fortunes in order to remain faithful to Him shall be brought to the enjoyment of a heavenly kingdom, how could we fear the scaffold, which was to put us in possession of this eternal happiness? In this way I endeavored to show the unfortunate man the difference between the two masters whom we served. He had been in the habit of spending fourteen hours a day in the service of the republic, which now rewarded him with a prison and a scaffold. "Believe me," said I, "if you will but return to God with sincerity of heart, if you will throw yourself like the prodigal at the feet of this tender Father, He will raise you up and will pardon you; and if you die upon the scaffold, you will draw down upon yourself the mercies of God, who renders to each one according to his works." Under the influence of these words and counsels, M. de Vormesel each day grew more and more calm, and became more accessible to the thoughts of religion and of the Church; morning and evening he prayed with us, and we daily gave him to read the life of a saint and a chapter of the Imitation of Christ. God did not permit us, however, to finish our work, for he was hur-

ried off to Paris and there guillotined. Before he left he asked M. Simon to give him a copy of the Imitation, wishing, as he said, to strengthen himself in the good sentiments with which we had inspired him. God grant that he may have had the grace to persevere!

During our two months' sojourn at Bordeaux we had a visit one day from Isabeau, the representative of the people, who had been for several years principal of the college of Tours, so that most of us were known to him. In the first room which he entered he saw M. Simon, and immediately launched forth in invectives against him. A few days afterward he ordered us to be sent back to Blaye, to Fort Pâti. This was in the month of December, and the cold was most intense. We packed up what few things we had, and they were even carried down into the court, for we expected to leave the very next day. The officer, however, who had been charged with the execution of the order made a mistake. Instead of coming to take us, he went to the prisons of the palace and fetched some of our companions who had been transferred to the Carmelite convent; thus the very persons who had been removed from Pâti precisely because they could not stand the damp of that fortress, even during the warm weather, were now sent back again to the same place in the depth of winter. They suffered greatly from the cold and the high tides; the water filtered through the vaults in such abundance that some of them were even obliged to keep their umbrellas open over their beds, in order that their heads at least might be kept dry. Meanwhile, not knowing what had been done, we remained in daily expectation of our removal; we had no change of linen, for the jailers would not allow us to go down to the court to reopen our boxes. At last, after a fortnight's delay, we were re-embarked for Blaye, not, however, to join our companions at Pâti, but were again taken to the citadel. This time we were not lodged in the prison, but in the story above that occupied by the soldiers, in little boarded rooms, without beds, sheets, or blankets, and we had to pay even for straw. Our rooms had no ceiling, and were immediately under the tiles; but there were fireplaces, so that by purchasing from the soldiers what wood they could spare, we were enabled to have fires. Happily we were able to perform all our exercises of piety with tolerable tranquillity, and even succeeded in having the holy sacrifice of the Mass; for some charitable souls at Bordeaux had contrived to send us all that was necessary for that purpose. Every morning, therefore, about four o'clock, while the soldiers who guarded us were stil

asleep, we got up in silence, and one of our number, in the name of all the rest, offered to the God of strength and mercy the heavenly Victim.

At Bordeaux we had been allowed a pound of bread a day, but on our arrival at Blaye they gave us only three-quarters of a pound, and by and by this was still further reduced to half-a-pound until Mid-Lent. Moreover, at Bordeaux the bread was made of millet, but here it consisted of pease and beans ground into flour, and generally spoiled on board the merchant-vessels which brought it. This bread was of the color and weight of earth, and had a most detestable taste and smell; we could not have eaten it but for the frightful hunger by which we were tormented. At Mid-Lent our ration was again reduced to four ounces, and, finally, from Easter until our embarkation we only had a pound given us every ten days. To supply the deficiency, those who had money bought wine, meat, fruit, etc. The soldiers received daily a pound of good brown wheaten bread; they put aside a little to sell to us, but, as we were obliged to give them whatever price they chose to ask, we could not all indulge in this luxury. The rest of us endeavored to do as well as we could by the help of some fermented and almost rotten herrings dressed with leeks, which we procured from some women of the country, who were allowed to come to the citadel. To this we added nettles, also beet and any other herbs we could pick up in the courtyard, and the whole was seasoned with vinegar and coarse brown sugar, made to supply the place of butter.

In the month of May Isabeau came to visit the citadel. He was dressed in the uniform of a general, with a plume in his hat and a sword at his side, about fifty officers and others accompanying him. He chose to see again the priests from Tours, and, turning furiously to M. Simon, he told him that the citadel was too good a place for such as he was, and ordered him to be forthwith conducted to Pâti, an order which was executed the following day. This worthy priest had so won the affections of every one that even the members of the committee shed tears at his departure. During the seven years that I spent in the college of Tours I had been particularly honored by the friendship of Isabeau. He was not aware that I was here, and evinced great surprise when he saw me. "What!" said he, "are you here, too—you? This is very astonishing."

"It is indeed astonishing," said I, "that we should both of us be here—you in the situation and costume in which I see you, and I in the state in which I am."

"If you had trusted me and taken the oath, you would now be happy, like those of your companions who followed my advice."

"Such happiness as that," I replied, "I do not envy. The tranquillity of my conscience is more precious to me than everything else."

"What can I do for you?" he then inquired.

"All I ask of you," I replied, "is to let us have some bread, for we have had none for ten days."

"I will send you some. Adieu." And so he took his leave, he and all his suite.

The Abbé Royer, who had also been under him in the college, cried out, as he was going away, "Citizen Isabeau, give us some bread!" He turned round and answered, "You have chosen to follow the Pope; go and ask him for bread." Isabeau, however, kept his word, and sent us daily a quarter of a pound of good oat-cake each; but this only lasted for three weeks. At the end of that time we were reduced to our pound of bean-bread every ten days, and this went on till the 15th of November for those who did not work. Those who were employed on the works had a special allowance of food assigned to them after the 4th of August. On Friday, the 1st of that month, the members of the committee of inspection, accompanied by several officers, came to examine our trunks and bags. They made the most minute search, and took away our breviaries and other books, our pictures and crucifixes; these last they tore in pieces, broke, and stamped under foot before our eyes. They also took away our money and what few articles of plate we had been able to keep until then. Not even our chalice could be concealed from them. We had buried it, but after they had found everything else, they felt confident that we had some sacred vessels, and the soldiers turned up the earth with their bayonets until they discovered it. Immediately they seized it, together with a small ciborium, and carried off these precious treasures in triumph, as though they had gained a glorious victory over the God for whom they knew that we were fighting with so much perseverance. The next day we were called together upon the terrace; our letters of holy orders were demanded from us, and if not voluntarily given up were forcibly seized. When this had been done, they gave us notice that instruments would be brought to us to-morrow, for that we were to be set to work. We observed to them that to-morrow was Sunday.

"That is precisely the reason," they answered, "that we shall make you work on that day."

"And precisely because it is Sunday," we replied, "we refuse to work. Is it possible that you are not acquainted with the cause of our confinement here? Is it not for the defence of the holy religion of our fathers? And how then shall we do anything which that religion forbids?"

"If you don't work to-morrow, you will be taken to the dungeon."

"To the guillotine, if you will! We are ready to suffer anything, even death itself, rather than violate the laws of God and of His Church! Besides, has not liberty of conscience been decreed?"

"Oh," answered a Jew, a captain of artillery, "he who decreed the existence of a Supreme Being is guillotined."

It was thus that we learned the death of Robespierre. He had issued orders to guillotine, on the 5th of August, all the priests confined at Bordeaux and Blaye, in all about twelve hundred. This terrible Robespierre, who intended to guillotine us in the beginning of August, was himself guillotined, together with his brother, on the 27th of July.

When the members of the Vigilance Committee saw that we would not consent to work on Sunday, we were sent back to our rooms and left till the next evening without food or water. In the afternoon, however, about five o'clock, we were again brought out upon the terrace, and the commissioners inquired of us, in a milder tone, whether we would commence work the following day; to this we agreed, adding that we were willing to work every day except Sunday. This matter being thus settled, they brought us, the next morning, spades, shovels, and wheelbarrows. We were employed at first in collecting the filth of the fortress and carrying it to a hole which the commandant wished to have filled up. Some of us cleansed the streets, the spaces round the cannon, and did other things of the same kind. All who were engaged in this work received a few ounces of bread as their sole payment; but twelve of the strongest drew an instrument called the *diable*, a small cart, upon which were piled large stones, to be hauled from the port up to the citadel, on the top of the hill. Those who consented to this occupation were allowed a pound of bread a day. Twelve workmen of the town had been previously employed at it, and they used to think that they had done a good day's work when they had been three times between the port and the citadel. The priests, however, made twelve journeys to and fro the first day they were set to work, which astonished the master-carpenter so much that he could talk of nothing else. "I was told," said he, "that the priests were all idle

and good-for-nothing; but I never had such diligent workmen as these." The engineer also said that he wished he could always have priests to work in the dockyards, for the work would be much more quickly done. Others of our number were employed in levelling, wheeling barrows, and bringing earth from the subterranean passages which were being constructed. Those who were old or infirm scraped the streets and open places of the citadel, which covered as much space and contained as much building as a town of six thousand inhabitants; and for this labor they received a quarter of a pound of bread a day. We worked in this way as common laborers during three months and a half, both in the interior of the citadel and on the port, and the public feeling of the people of Blaye became much changed toward us in consequence.

The women, who brought their baskets to the citadel on Sundays as on other days, used to do justice to our conduct, even at the cost of condemning themselves. "The priests do not mind being hungry," they said; "they are determined not to work on Sunday;" for it ought to be mentioned that on the days when we did not work we had no allowance of bread. The commandant of the citadel, a violent Red Republican, had been dismissed on the fall of Robespierre, and had been succeeded by one more gentle and humane. As on week days we went out of the citadel to work on the port, so this man allowed us on Sundays also to go out for a walk. By this means we were able to see some good Christians in the town, who were still attached to the Catholic faith, and who procured for several priests the power of saying Mass in their rooms, at which a number of the faithful used eagerly to attend. The commandant told us that he trusted to our honor, being well assured that none of us would abuse his kindness by effecting our escape, and so compromising his responsibility. He certainly did not err in trusting us; not one of us would have been base enough so to abuse his generosity, and, besides, we felt too much honored in being prisoners for Jesus Christ's sake to think of escaping.

Isabeau, always violent against us, ordered that we should be put on board certain vessels which had been used for the negroes; none but those who were seriously ill or infirm were to be exempted. Moreover, fearing lest we might be too well treated in French Guiana, on his own responsibility and by his own arbitrary will he violated the law of the Constitution, and changed the place of our transportation. He gave instructions that we were to be disembarked on the desert shores of the west of Africa, hoping, doubtless,

that we might either become the slaves of the Turks or the prey of wild beasts. With a view to the execution of this order, the authorities ordered us to undergo a medical inspection, the result of which was that all the sound and healthy priests, to the number of six hundred, were embarked on board three vessels, *Le Gentil*, *Le Dunkerque*, *Les Associés*. These vessels descended the Gironde to Blaye, and on the 15th of November, 1794, the *Gentil* completed her cargo by taking on board all the priests of Fort Pâti and of the citadel. Thus we were two hundred and fifty on board, crowded between decks not more than three feet high, so that we were unable to stand. On the day of our embarkation all the inhabitants of Blaye came to see us and accompanied us to the port. Their feelings and demonstrations were very different from what we had experienced eighteen months before, on our first arrival.

Our floating prisons were furnished with flour and wine for the passage, as also with implements for the cultivation of the barren deserts upon which we were to be landed. At first we were put upon the same rations as the sailors—a pound and a half of bread daily, with half a pound of salt pork or hard beef, or occasionally dried codfish, for our morning meal. At night, for our supper, a large caldron was filled with beans, which were served out to us half cooked, without being shelled or having undergone any sort of cleansing, in buckets, a bucketful among ten of us. All our food was prepared in a most filthy manner. Notwithstanding this disgusting want of cleanliness, this bad cooking, and bad seasoning, we were so hungry after our twelve months' fast at Pâti and the citadel that we devoured what they gave us with great avidity. When the cook saw this, he diminished the quantity and made us pay when we wanted more. I have seen canons of cathedrals, who had been accustomed in their own homes to the most scrupulous cleanliness, give this wretch an assignat of five francs for a spoonful of his beans—so much power has hunger in overpowering delicacy. At the end of a fortnight we had become a little less ravenous, and were proportionately more disgusted with the dirt of our food. So the captain gave us leave to prepare our own food for the future, which, though it was of the same bad quality, certainly rendered it more eatable. The officers themselves kept an excellent table, furnished with all kinds of luxuries. Twice a day they had what they called prayers; that is to say, they assembled all the crew upon the deck, and, with their heads uncovered, sang the "Marseillaise" in chorus, with all the outward show of devotion, raising their eyes to heaven, as if to

implore the benediction of that God whom they refused to acknowledge and whom they were insulting by their profane song. They did not disturb us in our own exercises of piety, but allowed us to pray aloud and all together twice a day; for a general officer who had come to visit us on board before we set sail, and with whom one of our party happened to be personally acquainted, had kindly made his interest with the authorities of the town to restore to us our breviaries and other books that had been taken away on the 1st of August. They were now sent out to us in a boat, and although it proved that many of them had been lost and damaged, yet by using them alternately all of us were able to say office. Those who were lodged on the deck or between decks were able to enjoy this consolation from eight o'clock in the morning until supper-time; but the greater number, being in the hold, were in almost total darkness.

From Christmas to Candlemas the cold was most intense and accompanied with violent gales of wind; and as our oven and caldron were upon deck, those who prepared the food were exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, and several of us were seized with violent colds and inflammations on the chest, until at last we were really unable to brave it any longer; and for several days we were obliged to live upon our hard sea-biscuit alone, those whose teeth were not very strong crushing it with wooden hammers. We were obliged to go on deck for everything we wanted, and to return by an uncovered winding staircase, which the rain and snow rendered so slippery as to cause us many a fall. Night commenced with us at four o'clock and lasted until eight in the morning, during the whole of which time we were shut up without lights and lying upon the bare boards. Moreover, we were infested with rats and mice, which were continually running over our bodies and faces, and even entangled in our hair.

At last, on the 6th of December, we set sail and went as far as Royan; and, of course, many of us soon suffered much from seasickness. On the 17th we set sail again for the Island of Aix, a passage which under ordinary circumstances is only of six or seven hours. A strong north wind, however, delayed our progress, so that we did not reach it before the morning of the 18th. Here we remained for a fortnight, the captain not venturing out to sea on account of the English cruisers. On Christmas night so violent a storm arose that we were in great danger of perishing. The vessel had been secured against the fury of the tempest by four anchors. Three of the cables broke; had not the last and strongest remained firm, we should

certainly have been lost. But the Infant Jesus, whose birth the Church was that night celebrating, again calmed the winds and the sea, and on Christmas Day we assisted the sailors in working the ship. The captain, seeing no chance of being able to put to sea so as to take us to Africa, and not wishing to expose himself to be taken by the English, determined to go up the river Charente, beyond the battery which defends the passage. Here we found two vessels at anchor, upon which had been crowded, in the month of July, eight hundred priests, condemned like ourselves to transportation, and sent with this intent to Rochefort. The members of the department of Rochefort not being Federalist, like those of Bordeaux, these priests were much worse treated than we had been. Their trunks and everything else had been taken from them, so that they went on board with nothing but the clothes which they were actually wearing. Death, however, soon set free many of these poor captives. They had been taken on board during the greatest heat of summer. The captains, most inhuman Red Republicans, confined them in the hold during the whole of the night, and during almost the whole of the day also. They were only allowed to come on deck to take their meals. About a dozen died every night from suffocation; the survivors implored their jailers to open the hatches, in order that they might have a little air, and told them that there were already a dozen dead; to which the only answer they received was, "So much the better; that is not enough yet." In the morning they went on deck to receive their rations, and were then obliged to bring up the bodies of their deceased brethren, which were thrown into boats. The strongest among them were sent ashore with the corpses, to dig the graves and bury them. During the seven months they remained on board these vessels more than six hundred died; by the month of December scarcely two hundred had been able to withstand the effects of such barbarous treatment, and even these were so pale and emaciated that they looked more like skeletons than living men. They were kept on board till the 2d of February, when the authorities of Rochefort, having been changed, behaved with less barbarity, and sent them to be confined at Saintes and at St. Jean d'Angely, where they were well treated and soon set at liberty.

As for ourselves, our captivity was prolonged until the month of April; but the captains of the ships became much more merciful toward us. At first they had often placed us in irons; if we ventured to make the slightest complaint, we were immediately brought upon deck, loaded with chains, and exposed for twenty-four hours to

the most severe cold. Latterly, on the contrary, these same captains talked to us with civility, sometimes even with friendliness; they occasionally invited us to their table, and, what was far more precious and more pleasing to us, they allowed us to say Mass on board our vessels on Sundays and holidays, and even assisted at it themselves with all their crew. The vessels, being in the Charente, were not inconvenienced by the motion of the sea, and we were consequently able to celebrate the Holy Mass without difficulty and even to make our Easter communions.

France had been governed since the fall of Robespierre by the Conventional Assembly, which had established a commission of public safety, composed of twelve of its members. Every fortnight each one in turn became President, and thus exercised sovereign power in the republic. During the presidency of the butcher Legendre, one of the most cruel Republicans, God permitted that a young man from Rochefort, very well disposed toward us, should be nominated secretary for the fortnight. This secretary wrote at once to a Catholic of Rochefort, to inquire the names of the priests who were confined on board the ships, in order that he might give them their liberty. This good Catholic hastened to us with the news, and asked our names; but, as we feared that there might be some intention of representing us as having taken the oaths, we refused to give them, being resolved rather to die on board our vessels or in exile than to take, or appear to have taken, the oath. Our scruples were reported at Paris, and the secretary answered that we might be quite easy, for such was not his intention; that all he desired was to set us at liberty. M. Dupuy des Chapelles, canon of St. Gatien, then prepared a list of the priests of the diocese of Tours, which was sent immediately to Paris, and our liberation took place on Low Sunday. In the haste with which the lists were made out, several names were omitted. Four of our brethren of Tours were in this predicament, and altogether about a hundred were obliged to remain on board. Their names were afterward sent to Paris, but it was too late—the presidency of Legendre had expired, and our friend the secretary could do nothing for them. Some time after our departure, as the number did not suffice for three ships, they were put ashore and sent to the little port of Brouage, three leagues from Rochefort, a marshy and unhealthy situation, where most of them died. We who had been set at liberty were allowed at once to leave Rochefort, and passports were given us for our own province. Those who were able took places in the public conveyances; the others performed the

journey on foot, like pilgrims, carrying their bundles on their backs. We found the disposition of the people was very much changed toward us. All the horrible impieties instituted by Robespierre had at length opened the eyes of the people.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, THE APOSTLE OF THE INDIES.

Among those who in the sixteenth century labored successfully in the great work of converting the nations, the most illustrious was St. Francis Xavier, the thaumaturgus of these later ages, whom Urban VIII. justly styled the Apostle of the Indies. This great saint was born in Navarre, at the castle of Xavier, eight leagues from Pampeluna, in 1506. His mother was heiress of the two illustrious houses of Azpilcueta and Xavier, and his father, Don John de Jasso, was one of the chief counsellors of state to John III. d'Albret, King of Navarre. His inclination determined his parents to send him to Paris in the eighteenth year of his age, where he entered the college of St. Barbara. Having studied philosophy two years, he proceeded master of arts; then taught philosophy at Beauvais College, though he still lived in that of St. Barbara.

St. Ignatius came to Paris in 1528 with a view to finish his studies, and after some time entered himself pensioner in the college of St. Barbara. Having one day found Xavier more than ordinarily attentive, he repeated to him these words: "*What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*" and remonstrated that so noble a soul ought not to confine itself to the vain honors of this world. Xavier then began to see into the emptiness of earthly greatness, and to find himself powerfully touched with the love of heavenly things. He thenceforth gave himself up to the conduct of Ignatius, and the direction of so enlightened a guide made the paths of perfection easy to him. By pious meditations, which sunk deep into his soul, he was wholly changed into another man, in his desires, affections, and views; so that afterward he did not know himself, and the humility of the cross appeared to him more amiable than all the glories of this world. In 1534, on the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, St. Ignatius and his six companions, of whom Francis was one, made a vow at Montmartre to visit the Holy Land, and unite their labors for the conversion of the infidels. Three others afterward joined these six, and, having ended their studies the year following, these nine companions departed from Paris upon

the 15th of November, in 1536, to go to Venice, where St. Ignatius had agreed to meet them from Spain. They arrived at Venice on the 8th of January, 1537, and were much comforted to meet there St. Ignatius, by whose direction they divided themselves to serve the poor in two hospitals in that city, while they waited for an opportunity to embark for Palestine. St. Ignatius, who stayed behind alone at Venice, sent his companions to Rome, to ask the blessing of His Holiness Paul III. for their intended voyage. The Pope granted those among them who were not in holy orders a license to receive them at the hands of any Catholic bishop. Upon their return to Venice, Xavier was ordained priest upon St. John Baptist's day, in 1537, and they all made vows of chastity and poverty before the Pope's nuncio.

The saint set sail from Lisbon on the 7th of April, in the year 1541, the thirty-sixth year of his age, on board the admiral's vessel, which carried Don Martin Alfonso de Sousa. general-governor of the Indies, who went with five ships to take possession of his government. Before he went on board, the king delivered to him four briefs from the Pope, in two of which His Holiness constituted Xavier apostolic nuncio, with ample power and authority; in the third, he recommended him to David, Emperor of Ethiopia, and in the fourth, to other princes in the East. After five months of perpetual navigation, and doubling the Cape of Good Hope, they arrived at Mozambique, on the eastern coast of Africa, about the end of August, and there they wintered. Crossing the sea of Arabia and India, they landed at Goa on the 6th of May, in 1542, in the thirteenth month since their setting out from Lisbon. He sweetly gave up the ghost, in 1552. Though he was only forty-six years old, of which he had passed ten and a half in the Indies, his continual labors had made him gray betimes, and in the last year of his life he was grizzled almost to whiteness.

Many miracles were wrought through his intercession, in several parts of the Indies and Europe, confessed by several Protestants, and Tvaernier calls him the St. Paul and the true Apostle of the Indies. St. Francis was beatified by Paul V. in 1554, and canonized by Gregory XV. in 1662. By an order of John V., King of Portugal, the Archbishop of Goa, in 1744, performed a visitation of the relics of St. Francis Xavier; at which time the body was found without the least bad smell, and seemed environed with a kind of shining brightness, and the face, hands, breast, and feet, had not suffered the least alteration or symptoms of corruption. In 1747, the same

king obtained a brief of Benedict XIV., by which St. Francis Xavier is honored with the title of patron and protector of all the countries in the East Indies.

Holy zeal may properly be said to have formed the character of St. Francis Xavier. And the saint, like another St. Paul, made himself all to all, and looked upon all fatigues, sufferings, and dangers as his pleasure and gain. In one of his letters to Europe, he wrote as follows: "I have often thought to run over all the universities of Europe, and principally that of Paris, and to cry aloud to those who abound more in learning than in charity: Ah! how many souls are lost to heaven through your neglect! Many, without doubt, would be moved, would make a spiritual retreat, and give themselves the leisure for meditating on heavenly things. They would renounce their passions, and, trampling under foot all worldly vanities, would put themselves in a condition of following the motions of Divine will. Then they would say: Behold me in readiness, O Lord. How much more happily would these learned men then live! With how much more assurance would they die! Millions of idolaters might be easily converted, if there were more preachers who would sincerely mind the interests of Jesus Christ, and not their own." But the saint required missionaries that are prudent, charitable, mild, perfectly disinterested, and of so great purity of manners that no occasion of sin weaken their constancy. This saint was himself a model of such preachers, formed upon the spirit of the Apostles. So absolute a master he was of his passions that he knew not what it was to have the least motion of choler and impatience, and in all events was perfectly resigned to the Divine will; from whence proceeded an admirable tranquillity of soul, a perpetual cheerfulness, and equality of countenance. He rejoiced in afflictions and sufferings, and said that one who had once experienced the sweetness of suffering for Christ will ever after find it worse than death to live without a cross.

By humility the saint was always ready to follow the advice of others, and attributed all blessings to their prayers, which he most earnestly implored. The union of his soul with God by holy prayer raised him above the world. Engulfed in deep meditations, he was sometimes found suspended in the air, with beams of glory round his countenance, as many ocular witnesses deposed.—*Rev. Alban Butler.*

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, APOSTLE OF THE INDIES.

THE APPARITION OF THE IMAGE OF OUR LADY OF GAUDALOUPE.

The Apparition of Our Lady of Guadaloupe.

About 300 years ago a poor Indian named Juan Diego, who lived a few miles from the City of Mexico, started to the city to get a Catholic priest to visit a sick member of his family. Night overtook Juan before he reached the city and he took refuge in a little valley. When he arose in the early morning he saw a strange radiance streaming over the mountain tops. Juan climbed to the spot whence the brightness seemed to come. There he found a beautiful lady of wonderful countenance, but gentle and winning in mien. She told him that he need not go after the priest, because the sick one was already healed, but she commanded him to go at once to the Bishop and say that she desired a church built on the spot where she stood. With this injunction she dismissed him.

Juan went back to his home, and to his great wonder and joy he found the sick one recovered, as the radiant lady had told him. But he feared to do what she had commanded him. He was only a poor Indian. Surely the Bishop would never listen to this strange tale. So he kept the fair lady's message safely locked in his breast. Soon he again started to go to the city, and again on the selfsame spot appeared the vision of the lady. She reproached him for failing to do her bidding, and again she enjoined him to carry her words to the Bishop. But again Juan's heart proved too weak for the task. How could he, the ignorant and friendless Indian, gain access to the holy presence of the Bishop to prove the truth of what he had to say? So, though sorely troubled in spirit, Juan still forebore to undertake the mission allotted to him. Once more he set out for the city, and for the third time the wonderful lady met him at the same place where she had twice before appeared. Her wounded looks and softly reproachful words cut him deeply.

"Son, why hast thou been unmindful of my slight request? Is this thy gratitude for the healing of thy sick one?"

"Ah, lady," sobbed Juan, as he threw himself at her feet, "I am but a poor Indian. The servants of the mighty Bishop would never admit me to his presence. They will drive me away and perhaps beat and imprison me. What token shall I bear that shall open the holy man's door and attest the truth of the words I shall speak? Alas, lady, the task is too great."

It was not the season of flowers, and what was the surprise of Juan, therefore, when he suddenly saw a bed of roses blossom forth from the fair lady's feet.

"Gather thy blanket full and bear them to the Bishop as a witness that I sent thee," said the lady.

Juan obeyed. But when he came before the Bishop and opened the blanket, behold, instead of roses, there appeared imprinted upon the blanket a likeness of the Holy Virgin, with the well-known features and bright halo. The Bishop received the message, and built the Church of Our Lady of Guadaloupe, which stands to this day a few miles from the City of Mexico.

Before the building of the church the Catholic missionaries had met with small success in their efforts to convert the natives to the true faith. But the completion of this church marked the dawn of brighter days, wherein the labors of the brothers of the Society of Jesus were soon rewarded with millions of converts.

Our Lady of Gudaloupe became the titular saint of Mexico. Her sanctuary is the favorite object of pilgrimage from all parts of the land. Countless are the cures said to be wrought at her shrine, and, most wonderful of all, the very blanket in which Juan Diego gathered the roses over three hundred years ago is still kept in the church in a perfect state of preservation, though made of weak and perishable fibre which commonly decays quickly, and the imprint of the Virgin can still be plainly seen.

LIVING AND DYING

IN

The Holy Catholic Faith

ILLUSTRATED

EMBRACING LIFELIKE SCENES FROM

The Corporal Works of Mercy

God never fails to be with His servants in what they undertake for His honor; and the difficulties, whether real or imaginary, with the apprehension of which the devil attempts to discourage them, are banished by confidence and resolution, and vanish as shadows in the execution.—*Butler.*

HAPPY the man who day by day
In light and shade does well his work;
For him no true reproach can lurk
In minds of men when he's away.

Happy the man whose work is done
While God gives sunlight, and who waits
With garnered sheaves before God's gates
At set of sun—at set of sun.

Happy the man who knows his aim,
And seeks it for the love of God;
What matter, when beneath the sod,
Whether the world has praise or blame?

—*Professor Maurice Francis Egan.*

THE GIFT FROM GOD

HE answered: They are the children which God hath given to me, thy servant.—*Genesis xxxiii. 5.*

He answered: They are my sons which God hath given to me in this place.—*Genesis xlviii. 9.*

Behold the inheritance of the Lord are children; . . . As arrows in the hand of the mighty, so the children of them that have been shaken. Blessed is the man that filleth his desire with them; he shall not be confounded when he shall speak to his enemies in the gate.—*Psalm cxxvi. 3, 4, 5.*

Behold I and my children whom the Lord hath given me for a sign and for a wonder in Israel, from the Lord of hosts which dwelleth in Mount Sion.—*Isaias viii. 18.*

Let us pray.

O God, who hast prepared all good things for them that love Thee! pour into our hearts such a desire for Thy love, that we, loving Thee in all and above all, may attain Thy heavenly promises, which exceed all that we can desire. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.—*Prayer from "Chaplet of Acts of Divine Love."*

The Sovereign Pontiff, Pius VII., by a decree of the S. Cong. of Indulgences, August 11th, 1818, granted to all the faithful who, with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this chaplet of five decades, with the *Glory be to the Father* five times and the prayer:

AN INDULGENCE OF THREE HUNDRED DAYS, once a day.—*Raccolta, p. 28.*

THE GIFT FROM GOD

CHRISTIAN LOVE EXEMPLIFIED

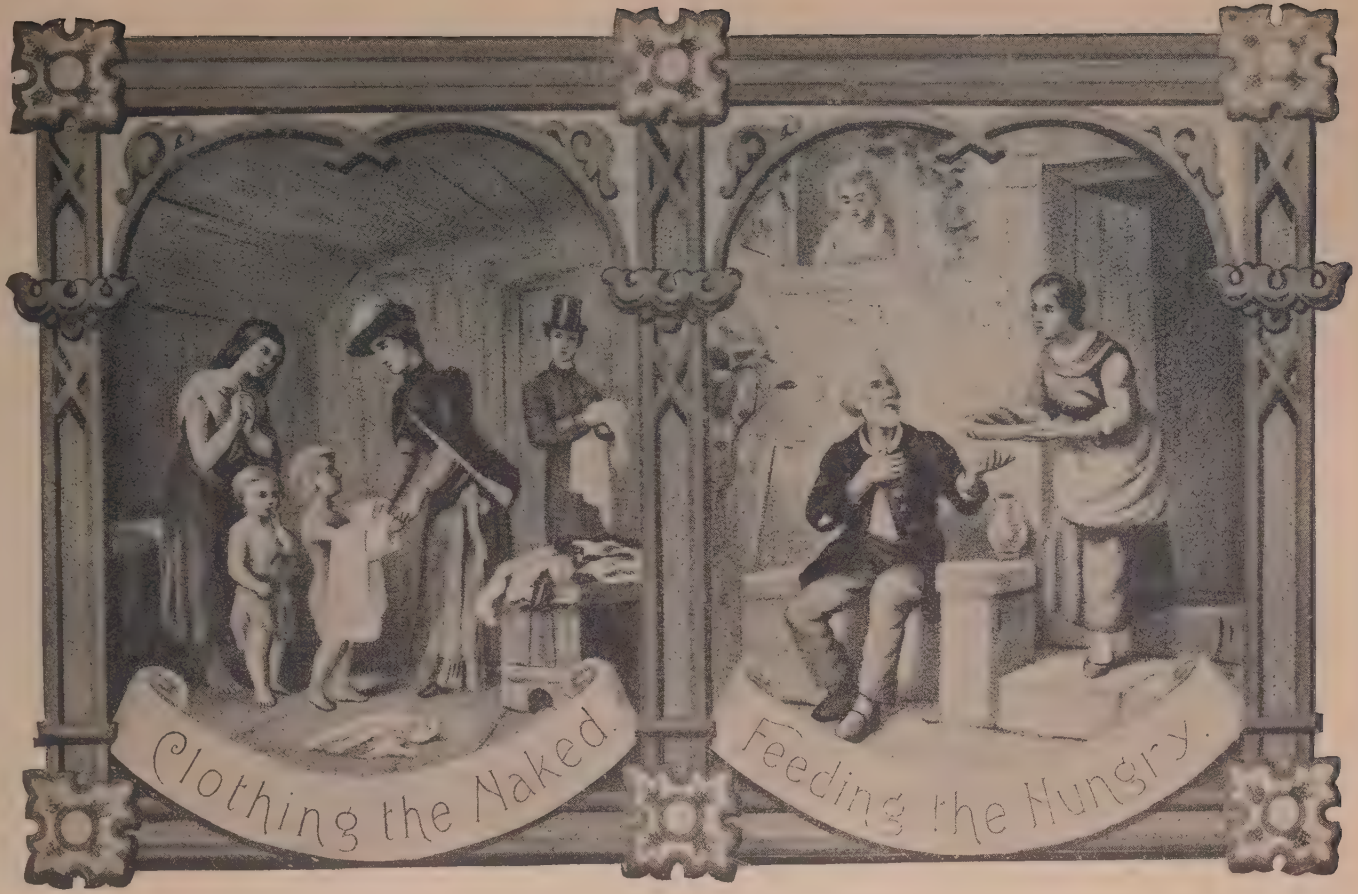
FOR I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me.—*St. Matthew xxv. 35, 36.*

CLOTHING THE NAKED

Religion, pure and unspotted with God and the Father, is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation, and to keep one's self undefiled from the world.—*St. James i. 27.*

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house: when thou shall see one naked, cover him and despise not thine own flesh.—*Isaias lviii. 7.*


Clothing the Naked.
Feeding the Hungry.

CHRISTIAN LOVE EXEMPLIFIED

FOR I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me.—*St. Matthew xxv. 35, 36.*

LODGING THE PILGRIM

And hospitality do not forget, for by this some, being not aware of it, have entertained angels.—*Hebrews xiii. 2.*

VISITING THE PRISONER

Remember them that are in bonds, as if you were bound with them: and them that are afflicted, as being yourselves also in the body.—*Hebrews xiii. 3.*

Lodging the Pilgrim.
Consoling the Prisoner.

CHRISTIAN LOVE EXEMPLIFIED

FOR I was hungry, and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger and you took me in: naked, and you clothed me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me.—*St. Matthew xxv. 35, 36.*

VISIT THE SICK

The Lord help him on his bed of sorrow: thou hast turned all his couch in his sickness.—*Psalm xl. 4.*

BURY THE DEAD

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, although he be dead, shall live: and every one that liveth, and believeth, in me, shall not die for ever.—*St. John xi. 25, 26.*

Visiting the Sick
Burying the Dead.

The Christian Mother's Child--From Earth to Heaven

BUT Jesus said unto them: Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me; for the kingdom of heaven is for such.—*St. Matthew xix. 14.*

The best beloved of the Lord shall dwell confidently in him.—*Deuteronomy xxxiii. 12.*

Shall I be able to bring him back any more? I shall go to him rather: but he shall not return to me.—*II. Kings xii. 23.*

For the girl is not dead, but sleepeth.—*St. Matthew ix. 24.*

And night shall be no more.—*Apocalypse xxii. 5.*

THE DYING CHILD'S FAREWELL

I die so soon, and yet I die
To win the crown of Life;
And mine—how soon the victory,
How brief my hour of strife!
My soul a flow'ret, dewy, sweet,
Shall blossom at the Saviour's feet!

His—ransomed in the saving tide
Of His own precious blood,
And purged from stain of Adam's guilt
In sacramental flood.
My legacy—Eternal Rest
Upon the Saviour's faithful breast!

When to my little grave you come,
Dear parents, now so sad,
Your faith and hope must stronger grow,
Your trusting hearts more glad;
For just beyond the grave I'll wait
To greet you at the Golden Gate.

From shortened pain to lasting joys
Death's welcome summons calls;
E'en now, upon my list'ning ear
Angelic music falls.
My soul responds with longing love;
Farewell! Weep not! We meet above!

My grateful mem'ry e'er shall cling
About you day by day,
For all the selfless joys you've cast
Upon my life's short way.
God bless your love, so strong and true!
Farewell! In Heaven I'll pray for you.

Dear friends, whose ling'ring gaze I meet
As here in death I lie,
Learn ye the one important task
Of life—the "How" to die;
That, when you too are called to go,
Death may not have a single throe!

Sacred to the Memory of

*Our beloved child*_____

*Born*_____

*Departed this life*_____

THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER'S CHILD—FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN.

THE REWARD OF THE CHRISTIAN FATHER

AS a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him.—*Psalm cii. 13.*

Keep innocence and behold justice: for there are remnants for the peaceable man.—*Psalm xxxvi. 37.*

For thee my flesh and my heart have fainted away: thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion forever.—*Psalm lxxii. 26.*

For which cause we faint not: but though our outward man is corrupted: yet the inward man is renewed day by day.—*II. Corinthians, iv. 16.*

Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life.—*Apocalypse ii. 10.*

THE DYING FATHER'S FAREWELL

God calls me, and I may not stay;
The sands of life are nearly run.
Its joys were few, its sorrows long;
'Tis over now,—my task is done.
'Tis our Heavenly Father's will;
I die—and dying, praise Him still.

Dear heart, that beat so true to mine
Through all our happy wedded years,
May not my grateful love assuage
Your grief, and dry your bitter tears?
God keep you, bless you, from on high,
When mould'ring in the tomb I lie.

O mother-heart, cease your repining!
The future is in God's own hand.
Fear not! He feeds the crying raven:
Can he forsake our little band?
What our united strength has done—
Can He not do, the Mighty One?

And you, my children, you who weep
Around your father's dying bed,
Fear not the morrow; it will bring
A blessing on each little head
Your mother's stay and solace be,
And leave the rest to God and me!

Her loving hand in helpless years
Will for your ev'ry need provide,
And you, when age has set its seal
Upon her brow, stay by her side,
Nor let your foot from duty stray;
God's blessing linger on your way!

Farewell! until your summons calls
To leave this world of sin and pain;
Till in the realms of endless bliss,
At home with God, we meet again:
We'll meet where parting is unknown,
Before our Heavenly Father's throne.

Sacred to the Memory of

Our beloved father .....

Born .....

Departed this life .....

THE REWARD OF THE CHRISTIAN FATHER.

THE REWARD OF THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER

HER children rose up and called her blessed: her husband and he praised her.—*Proverbs, xxxi. 28.*

I spake with my tongue: O Lord, make me know my end, and what is the number of my days; that I may know what is wanting in me.—*Psalm xxxviii. 5.*

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me; write: Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: for their works follow them.—*Apocalypse xiv. 13.*

THE DYING MOTHER'S FAREWELL

The parting hour—alas! how soon
It comes, ere life seems well begun.
My busy heart and hand still find
So many things they would have done.
God calls!—I lay the burden down,
And hasten to the beck'ning crown.

Dear partner of my wedded life,
Companion of my joys and tears,
Farewell! I leave our little flock
To God and thee for coming years.
For them my life was gladly spent,
On them my dying look is bent.

Poor darlings! How I fain would clasp
You to my yearning heart so warm
And hasten to our heavenly home,
Away, away from sin and harm.
Farewell! Weep not! Be good and true!
A mother's love will watch o'er you.

Before our Heavenly Father's throne
My prayers shall rise by day and night,
That He may keep you in His love
And guide your falt'ring steps aright.
Be not afraid! His loving hand
Is mighty as an arméd band.

Your hearts, still pure and innocent,
Have not yet tasted bitter care;
Your feet have trod the paths of peace
'Mid bloom of childhood's fancy fair.
Life's sterner duties wait you now;
God wills it so! Be strong and bow.

Bow when the cross seems hard to bear;
Submissive lift your trustful eyes;
Remember that your mother's prayer
Ascends for you beyond the skies.
Farewell, dear hearts! Be strong and true;
The crown awaits both me and you!

Sacred to the Memory of

Our beloved mother _____

Born _____

Departed this life _____

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
Our Beloved Mother.
Born
Departed this life
The parting hour—alas! how soon
It comes, ere life seems well begun.
My busy heart and hand still find
So many things they would have done.
God calls!—I lay the burden down,
And hasten to the beck'ning crown.
Dear partner of my wedded life,
Companion of my joys and tears,
Farewell! I leave our little flock
To God and thee, for coming years.
For them my life was gladly spent;
On them my dying look is bent.
Poor darlings! How I fain would clasp
You to my yearning heart so warm,
And hasten to our Heavenly Home,
Away, away from sin and harm.
Farewell! Weep not! Be good and true!
A mother's love will watch o'er you
Before our Heavenly Father's throne
My prayers shall rise by day and night,
That He may keep you in His love,
And guide your faltering steps aright.
Be not afraid! His loving hand
Is mighty as an armed band.
Your hearts, still pure and innocent,
Have not yet tasted bitter care,
Your feet have trod the paths of peace
Mid bloom of childhood's fancy fair.
Life sternest duties wait you now:
God wills it so! Be strong and bow.
Bow when the cross seems hard to bear;
Submissive lift your trustful eyes;
Remember that your mother's prayer
Ascends for you beyond the skies.
Farewell, dear hearts! Be strong and true:
The crown awaits both me and you!

THE REWARD OF THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER.

THE RETURN TO GOD.

IN HEAVEN WE KNOW OUR OWN;

OR

SOLACE FOR THE SUFFERING.

BY

REV. FATHER BLOT, S. J.

VOL. A.

INTRODUCTION.

The exaggerations of a certain school had formed a sort of mist which shut out from the view of a great number of afflicted persons the bright light of this truth, so consoling—*In heaven we know one another.* If its existence was not absolutely denied, it was little seen, still less *shown*, with all the balm which it contains for soothing the most bitter sorrows. It was this which decided a Christian widow, a bereaved mother, to ask us urgently for this unpretending volume, in which we endeavor to place the truth in its full light, in order that the sorrowing heart may see it, feel it, and rejoice.

From the same motive, several persons have requested the publication of the high testimonies of approbation which we have received. We have been kindly authorized to satisfy a desire, the only tendency of which is to render our little work still more consoling. These testimonies are, in fact, a fresh relief to souls tried by heart-rending separations; they contain instruction for all—condemnation of opponents, rather than praise of a publication of such slight importance. Far from resembling those doctrinal works whose import is deep and whose scope is wide, this is but a tissue of quotations, in which the hearts of the saints and of the doctors of the Church are laid open, so that the afflicted soul may herself draw therefrom the consolations she requires.

But it has been said to us, Was it necessary, however, to direct the attention of men to a thing in itself so simple and so evident?

"For a long time," wrote Monseigneur Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans—"for a long time I have wished that such a book should be given to the public."

Monseigneur Fillion, Bishop of Le Mans, says: "I have read, with lively interest, *In Heaven We Know Our Own.* The truths which you have so happily expressed in the language of Scripture and of the holy Fathers are too necessary for all, during the exile of our present life, for your book not to be eminently successful, as I wish it to be with all my heart."

A sacerdotal veteran, one of the most experienced priests of Alsace, Rev. F. Mühé, remarks: "Your work is a balsam for the soul afflicted by the loss of its nearest and dearest; and how often, alas! in the performance of the duties of our holy calling, have we not occasion to administer this balsam! You have, therefore, rendered a great service not only to the laity, but likewise to all the priests who have care of souls. Besides, it is a subject of which writers rarely treat, even in theological works. In doing so, you have then truly performed the good work of 'comforting the afflicted.'"

Were there really men who kept this light under a bushel, or who covered over with ashes this fire which Eternal Wisdom brought down on earth?

Monseigneur Pie, Bishop of Poitiers, wrote to us: "Your little work, *In Heaven We Know Our Own*, is truly a pearl set in the fine gold of the doctrine of the Fathers. I have read it with profit and consolation, and I rejoice in all the soothing which it will bring to certain souls wanting instruction on this point, or having too easily received an impression from the sayings of some pseudo-theologians, who always think themselves nearest to the truth when they wound the most. Thanks, then, my dear Father, for all the good which this little volume will do."

His lordship was not satisfied with this approbation, as may be seen from the *Vienne Post* of 6th of November, 1862, which thus concludes a long article devoted to our book: "I will add, as the highest praise, that in Monseigneur Pie's eloquent homily on the feast of All Saints, his lordship advised all to read and meditate on those consoling pages, dictated by faith and love. The work of the Rev. Father Blot deserves, indeed, a distinguished place in all Christian libraries, and should be on the table of every pious family that faithfully preserves and celebrates the memory of its deceased members."

The Rev. Father Gratry rapidly penned us the following lines: "I have read your volume. I have diffused it and caused it to be circulated by dozens. I have read it with avidity—so quickly that I have, perhaps, omitted some pages; but I am reading it over again. You have had the happiest idea; you have passed just sentence, once for all, on the truly Jansenistic perversion of the idea of the future life: you have fully edified and enlightened me on this point. I was not aware, I own, how perfectly theological is your thesis, nor how incontrovertible in presence of so many authorities: I had the firm conviction, but not the theological science of this truth. I thank you warmly, my good Father, for having given it to me; I thank you for the good which you have done me, and which you will do to thousands of souls whom even the priest hesitates to console from this point of view. He will hesitate no longer."

But was it advisable to treat of so soothing a subject before such an audience as a generation scarcely aroused from its stupor by the thunders of Divine vengeance?

To this Monseigneur Malou replied, when he wrote to a friend: "I have just read *In Heaven We Know Our Own*. You ask me what I think of it. All works on heaven, its happiness, its eternity, give me pleasure, because, in our days, they are those which do the most good to souls. Formerly, it appears, speaking of death, judgment, and hell proved

more fruitful. Fear then had more influence than love; now, love has more power to convert souls. It is, therefore, love that must be inspired to confirm the just and to convert sinners. The subject treated of in this little work is full of interest; it replies to a question often put to us by pious persons. 'In heaven shall we know our own?' Yes, certainly we shall—and we shall love them; and this love, which they will reciprocate, will form a part of the accidental happiness of heaven. In my opinion, the author is accurate and overstates nothing. If he have a failing, it is, perhaps, that he does not exhaust his subject. In reading his little book I expected every moment to meet proofs which I did not perceive, though perhaps there, and which certainly have their value."

The learned prelate then enters into considerations which will be of great assistance to us whenever we complete this little work, by dealing with our subject from reason—one standpoint, as we have now done from that of authority, as another. We have thought less of maintaining a thesis requiring an effort of intellect than of writing letters of consolation to solace and give repose to the heart; and even when we finish the book, we shall aim at keeping it popular and adapted to all. In the meantime, what reader will not rejoice with us in the support given us by the illustrious Bishop of Bruges in the following passages:

"The society of the saints constitutes, said I to myself, the heavenly Jerusalem, the holy Sion, the city of God; but a town has its magistrates and its princes, as it has its citizens. To be a town, its inhabitants must be supposed to hold relations of superiority and subordination in the moral order, and these relations could not exist without the mutual recognition of souls.

"The society of the saints is God's family—a spiritual family transported from earth to heaven—a family of which Mary is still the mother, and distinguishes individually each of her beloved children. How can we conceive a family

whose members are unknown to one another? Can it be that the children know their father and their mother, and yet have no fraternal communication among themselves?

"The society of the saints forms a celestial hierarchy in imitation of that of the angels—if, indeed, it be not commingled with the latter. Now, we know that the angels recognize each other, since the superior orders enlighten the inferior, and that all mutually aid one another in praising, blessing, and adoring the thrice holy God. The blessed will do the same; and since the holy angels will know them as the substitutes of the fallen angels, they also will know the angels; and thus they will mutually recognize each other.

"Besides, is not the Church militant an imperfect image of the Church triumphant? If it be so, the Church triumphant will then preserve on her bosom, if I may so speak, the seal of the Church militant. I mean that the order and harmony which reign here below among the children of God will pass with them into the abode of the blessed. Thus, pastors in heaven will be found at the head of their flocks, bishops at the head of the faithful of their churches, sovereign pontiffs at the head of the entire Catholic Church, the patriarchs of religious orders at the head of their spiritual families, and of all those who have followed their rules, worn their habits, and imitated their example. But this order and harmony rest upon the mutual recognition of individuals, and upon relations in the moral order which, without mutual recognition, are impossible.

"The very nature of the celestial beatitude furnishes irrefragable proofs on this subject. This beatitude reposes altogether on the beatific vision—that is, upon the intellectual preception of the Divinity. And what is the intellectual perception but knowledge—mental action? The development of the intellect will then be, in some degree, the measure of the happiness of heaven. This happiness results, it is true, from love; but love itself is necessarily in pro-

portion to the knowledge which we have of the object of our happiness. We cannot love an unknown being, but we can love infinitely one whom we know to be infinitely worthy of our love. The intellect is then the faculty by which we apprehend and take possession of our happiness; and could we suppose the elect in complete ignorance of that which is in the highest degree interesting to them? Could we believe them to enjoy the knowledge of the essence of God, and yet not contemplate in this essence the joys which the other blessed find in it? That is quite impossible. The power which their minds have acquired of contemplating the Divinity—the source of all happiness—powerfully aids them in knowing those whom the Divine essence beatifies and fills with happiness around them. They enjoy not only the ray of light that places each of them in contact with the Divinity, but also the ocean of brightness which illuminates them and connects them with all the felicities of heaven.

"Although the essential happiness of the elect consists in the vision and the possession of the Divine essence, still, their beatitude is completed and perfected, if I may so express it, by the knowledge that they acquire of the beatitude of God's friends. In heaven, as on earth, God receives not alone isolated homage, but also the collective praises of all his children united.

"Besides, why in heaven all those aureolas, or particular signs of virtue or of glory? Why do martyrs, virgins, confessors, doctors, etc., bear a distinctive mark in the midst of the light common to all, if not in order to be more easily recognized and glorified by their brethren? It is not, certainly, to fix the attention of the Divinity, or of the angels, that these particular stamps of merit and of glory are necessary; it is to attract the gaze of the other elect. The blessed will then know and distinguish martyrs from confessors and virgins; and whilst they recognize their merits, they will also recognize their persons. There is then among the

blessed a regular intercourse of admiration, congratulation, applause, gratitude, which presupposes evidently a clear and direct personal knowledge.

"Moreover, we believe in the resurrection of the body. This is not rigorously necessary in order that the elect may know one another. Souls divested of their bodies assume intellectual forms, which intellects disengaged from the flesh can perceive, distinguish, and know. However, it is certain that the union of body and soul, which constitutes the earthly individuality, and that is dissolved by death, is a powerful means of distinguishing the elect from one another; and although the resurrection of the flesh may have other sublime ends, which it is useless here to enumerate, it is permitted to believe that the resurrection of the flesh will also partly contribute to facilitate to the blessed the knowledge which they will possess of their relations, their friends, and their benefactors.

"In this respect the dogma of the invocation of saints also supplies some light.

"During his life the Apostle St. Peter wrote to the faithful whom he had converted, assuring them that he would remember them after his death. These faithful, then, had a peculiar right to invoke him after his death. We have this right, to a certain extent, with regard to all the saints, but, above all, with regard to the saints whose names we bear, or who, by any title whatever, have become our particular patrons. Having reached heaven, the saints who knew us on earth know us still. What do I say? The saints who have reigned in heaven for ages—the holy martyrs who shed their blood in the first century of the Church, long before our birth, know us and love us in Jesus Christ. We invoke them with confidence and success.

"Now if the elect do not know each other in heaven, it follows that these blessed patrons, whose eyes have followed our course on earth, lose sight of us when we ascend to heaven, and cease to feel interested in our happiness. This

is evidently impossible. Far from being rent asunder, when we reach heaven the ties of love that united us to the saints are strengthened and bound closer. Faith and hope then cease, but 'charity remaineth always.' The saints who knew us on earth still know us, then, in heaven; and, as this prerogative is essentially common to all the elect, all the saints mutually know each other throughout all eternity.

"Finally, if the blessed did not know each other, what idea could we form of the joys of heaven? We should necessarily have to imagine a multitude of beings isolated one from the other without any reciprocal action or connection; motionless, absorbed in an unchanging contemplation, and, in some degree, materialized. The mind and the soul of the elect would be absorbed, I admit, in the knowledge and in the love of the Divine nature; but their entire assemblage would not form a society of friends, nor a spiritual family, still less the city of God. Heaven would be no longer the abode of delights, where all the faculties of a reasonable soul have their peculiar exercise, concurrently with the happiness of that soul and with the happiness of the other elect; but, instead, it would become, if the description may be excused, a species of cellular prison, where souls captivated by the essential happiness of the beatific vision would have no knowledge of what is passing around them, but would exist in a sort of listless isolation. Let us then abide by the idea of one society of saints, where charity reigns as a sovereign; by that of the family of Jesus and Mary, of which all the members know and love each other; by that of the kingdom of God, where everything proceeds with order and harmony, for the greatest happiness of all.

"These thoughts, and some others besides, presented themselves to my mind while I perused the little work of the Rev. Father Blot, whence I conclude that I owe them to him. I thank him very sincerely for having suggested

them to me, and I return them to him to repay a debt of gratitude. May his excellent publication shed the balm of Christian hope on many afflicted souls, and, while it makes us feel the spiritual ties which bind us among ourselves, may it unite us all more than ever to the Lord! After these observations, it is useless to say that I approve of the work, and that I hope to see it circulated in my diocese. The fact speaks for itself."

We cannot sufficiently express our gratitude to the venerable prelate, who, in spite of the sufferings occasioned by severe illness, has condescended to write, with his own hand, so long and so kind a letter. It permits us to hope that this humble little work will do some good to souls; above all, to those who, devoid of lively faith, venture, at the loss of some beloved friend, to murmur against Providence, and feel tempted to abandon the practices of Christian piety.

This hope is also given us by Monseigneur Wicart, Bishop of Laval: "I have read with much pleasure and profit your work, *In Heaven We Know Our Own.* Continue, my dear Father, to produce works as pious and, at the same time, as attractive. Many persons will be indebted to you for the happiness of wishing to advance with a firmer step in the way which leads to where we meet to live together eternally in God." Father Hamon, parish priest of St. Sulpice, also writes to us: "Your charming work is admirably adapted to console many poor, afflicted souls who, having enjoyed here below the happiness of loving certain dear ones, find a difficulty in conceiving that they can be happy far away from them. No doubt, God alone suffices for the heart; but the sensible part of our souls can scarcely raise itself to so high a truth; and if the knowledge which we have of one another in heaven does not add to our essential happiness in the bosom of God, the hope, at least, of this knowledge adds immensely to our consolation on earth. This is the end at which you have aimed;

and you have fully attained it. Your book is therefore a good work—a true act of charity; and, for my part, I return you my thanks."

The success which it has attained has itself given great joy to the sensitive soul of the person who first asked us for these *Letters of Consolation*, and whose hope was to console herself by consoling others. She writes: "I am certainly indebted to you for much consolation and many good desires. You are always kind enough to let me hear of the success of the work, *In Heaven We Know Our Own.* For this I thank you with all my heart. When I think that my sighs and my tears have drawn this book from your heart, I can only admire Divine Providence, which from a grain of mustard-seed has produced a tree under the shadow of which the souls of the afflicted repose."

Alas! Death has again lifted his sword. He long held it suspended; then struck a terrible blow—again snatching from this poor mother a beloved daughter. But grace lent her some resemblance to Mary, by her religious resignation: "I consecrated myself by vow to our good Mother at the most terrible moment of my grief, and she came to my help. Although I did not remain standing, like her, at the foot of the cross, I seated myself there, and left it not. It was she who obtained for me grace to do so."

May all mothers from whom death tears a child also invoke and imitate her who beheld her only Son crucified! May all those who read this little work have recourse to the Comforter of the Afflicted, and, at least, seat themselves at the foot of the cross, if there they cannot stand!

LETTER FIRST.

STATE OF THE QUESTION.

Madam: Death has cruelly stricken around you the persons you loved most. Your grief is extreme, and it is lawful; even though you feel no doubt of their eternal salvation. Why should you be forbidden to mourn your nearest and dearest who sleep in the Lord, provided that, following the counsel of the apostle, you be not sorrowful even as others who have no hope? (I. Thess. iv. 12.)

St. Augustine thus comments upon these words: "It is natural to grieve at the death of those who are dear to us, since death is abhorrent to nature, and faith teaches us that it is one of the chastisements of sin. Sorrow is a necessity when those whom we love depart from us by dying. For, though we know that they have not departed from us for ever, as if we were to remain always on earth, but that they have preceded us by a little, because we are destined soon to follow them, nevertheless how shall death, taking possession of our friend, not afflict our natural affection? Let it then be permitted to loving hearts to sorrow for the decease of their beloved, provided that there be a remedy for this grief, a consolation for these tears, in the joy of which faith gives us some foretaste, in rendering us confident of the fate of our dear deceased, who go only a little before us and pass into a better life."

St. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, consoled Pammachius, who had lost his wife Paulina, daughter of St. Paula and sister of St. Eutochium. The virtuous husband shed tears as abundantly as he dispensed alms. What will his friend do? Will he blame him for these tears? He will, on the contrary, commend him, and gather from Scripture all the examples

of holy tears shed at the death of a cherished friend. He will then add: "Why condemn the mourning of holy mortals? Did not Jesus Himself weep for Lazarus, whom He loved? Did He not deign to commiserate our unhappiness so far as to shed tears over one that was dead? Did He not, humbling Himself to the level of human infirmity, weep for him whom He was about to raise to life by means of His Divine virtue? It is for this, O my brother! that your tears are pious and holy; for a similar affection causes them to flow; and if you weep for a worthy and chaste companion, it is not that you have doubts of the resurrection, but it is that your love has its regrets and its desires."

In presence of those who reproach you with your tears, open the Gospel and, for your answer, point to the words of St. John, "And Jesus wept," and again, these, "And He troubled Himself." (St. John xi. 33-35.)

Show them the following lines from a writer who has deserved well of all afflicted persons: It was the will of Jesus to deny Himself that solace to be found in a *calm* affliction; it was His will to be *troubled.* His Divine nature permitted Him so to be, only inasmuch as He Himself concurred in this trouble; and that He did this the Gospel tells us. After such an example, let us no longer attribute to our imperfection the tears wrung from us by affliction, or the trouble into which it casts us—Jesus wept, Jesus was troubled. That this trouble degenerate not into uneasiness is all that is requisite to preserve its resemblance to that of Jesus.

"God forbid that I should disapprove the mourning of a husband who, after having raised his eyes to heaven, there to see his spouse crowned with immortality, feels them fill with tears as, turning them down to earth again, he no longer finds this beloved companion by his side! The sentiment which causes us to regret the person whose companionship formed our happiness, cannot be blamable when it is not the only source of the tears which we give to our loss. This desire to enjoy the society of those we love is so natural to man that

God offers him its gratification as the eternal reward of his fidelity to the Divine love during life."

Fully to enjoy what we have loved, religiously, on earth, is then heaven for us.

To enjoy God constitutes the essential beatitude; to enjoy creatures, the accidental beatitude.

This enjoyment of the created being, without ceasing to be secondary, becomes itself a sweet consolation to our hearts from the moment that death snatches from us those whom we loved the most, and that God, to moderate our grief, sends us the hope of beholding them once more, of recognizing them, of loving them, in particular, again in heaven, and also of receiving from them the proofs of a special affection.

How often has not this hope been a balsam to your wounds, a solace to your grief!

But there are several, even of those whose lips should keep knowledge, and whose hearts should be the depository of the law (Mal. ii. 7), who have ventured to tell you that in the other world, in Paradise even, friends do not recognize one another. Moreover, they have condemned, as an imperfection, your ardent desire to possess in heaven, besides the Creator, certain tenderly cherished creatures—your husband and your children. In fine, they make people believe that Christian perfection, and, still more, religious life, dries up, in the heart of man, the source of sensibility, to leave it withered and cold towards parents, brothers, sisters and friends. "In heaven all are forgotten in God," say they. "Is not God sufficient for you? The saints loved God alone."

These are the three errors which, in writing to you, I purpose combating.

Those who maintain them follow, perhaps without knowing it, in the track of the Quietists and the Jansenists, beneath the standards of anti-religious philosophism. In the desire to enjoy God Himself, Quietism discovered a violation of pure love and a breach of disinterestedness. Jansenism—polished as a mirror, but also as cold—communicated its

hardness and its inflexibility to a religion of love. The unbelieving philosophers profited by these tendencies to attack the Church and to throw discredit on the clergy. A learned religious of the order of Saint Dominic, discussing, in the eighteenth century, the subject of which I am now treating, drew attention to this manœuvre of impiety. Whilst everything in our religion tends to render her most amiable and most consoling, a deceptive philosophism attributes to her dark and desperate doctrines, that rob her of all that power of attraction which she needs in order to lead souls to love and follow Jesus Christ.

Do you want an example? Rousseau makes a dying person say: "A hundred times I have taken more pleasure in performing a good action by imagining my mother present, reading the heart of her daughter and applauding her. There is something so consoling in still living under the eye of one who was dear to us! It makes such a one only half die to us!" But what sentiments does this enemy of all revealed religion, Catholic or Protestant, lend to the minister who approaches to console and fortify the sick? Read: "Although the pastor replied to all with great gentleness and moderation, and even affected not to contradict her in anything, lest his silence on other points should be taken for consent, he did not fail to show himself the priest, for one moment at least, and to state an opposite doctrine on the other life. He said that the immensity, the glory, and the attributes of God would be the only objects which would occupy the souls of the blessed; that this sublime contemplation would efface every other remembrance; that we should not see or recognize each other, even in heaven; and that in God's entrancing presence we should think no more of anything earthly."

Let whoever propagates this gloomy doctrine, be he sincere minister of religion or pious layman, see, now, what cause he serves, in what ranks he is found!

To prove to you its falsity, I will, madam, pass in review

before you a great number of those authors who, from their antiquity, their science, their orthodoxy, and their sanctity, have been called the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. They will all let you penetrate into their hearts. It will be as agreeable as useful to you to see how sensible they always were to the hope of recognizing and loving again, after death, those whom they had known and loved during life.

LETTER SECOND.

IN HEAVEN ALL KNOW EACH OTHER.

Madam: All the blessed, admitted into heaven, know each other, perfectly, even before the general resurrection. This is proved by Scripture as well as by tradition.

I shall confine myself to quoting the New Testament to you; I shall content myself, too, with the parable of the rich man, and with some words which have reference to the last judgment.

This parable is so fine, that I cannot resist the pleasure of placing some of its leading points before you.

There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day; and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table—but none were given to him; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell. And when he was in torments, lifting up his eyes, he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said: "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." And Abraham said to him: "Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." . . . And he said then: "Father, I beseech thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto

them, lest they come also in this place of torment." (St. Luke xvi. 19-31.)

This it is that made St. Irenæus, when combating heretics in the beginning of the third century, write: "The Lord has revealed to us that in another life souls are mindful of the actions which they performed in this. Does He not teach us this truth in the history of the bad rich man and of Lazarus? For Abraham knows what relates both to one and to the other. Souls continue, then, to know one another, and to remember those things which are here below."

In the eighth century the Venerable Bede put this question to himself: "Do the good know each other in the kingdom of heaven, and do the bad know the bad in hell?" He answered in the affirmative. "I see a proof of it," said he, "clearer than day, in the parable of the bad rich man; does not our Lord there openly declare that the good know each other, and the wicked also? For if Abraham did not know Lazarus, how could he speak of his past misfortunes to the bad rich man who is in the midst of torments? And how could this rich man not know those who are present, since he is mindful to pray for those who are absent? We see, besides, that the good know the wicked, and the wicked the good. In fact, the rich man is known to Abraham; and Lazarus, in the ranks of the elect, is recognized by the rich man, who is among the number of the reprobate.

"This knowledge fills up the measure of what each shall receive; it causes the just to rejoice the more, because they see those they have loved rejoice with them; it makes the wicked suffer not only their own pains, but also in some sort the pains of others, since they are tormented in company with those whom they loved in this world to the exclusion of God. There is, even for the blessed, something more admirable still. Beyond the recognition of those whom they have known in this world they recognize also, as if they had seen them and previously known them, the good whom they never saw. For of what can they be ignorant

in heaven, since all there behold, in the plenitude of light, the God who knows all?"

On the last judgment, we have these words of Jesus Christ to His disciples: "Amen, I say to you, that you who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix. 28.) We have these words of St. Paul to the Corinthians: "Know you not that the saints shall judge this world? Know you not that we shall judge angels?" (I. Cor. vi. 2, 3.)

Such is the basis of the argument of St. Theodore Studites, in a discourse which he composed at the end of the eighth, or the commencement of the ninth, century, to refute the error which we are here combating.

"Some," said he, "deceive their hearers by maintaining that the men who rise again will not recognize each other when the Son of God comes to judge us all. How, they exclaim, when from perishable we become incorruptible and immortal—when there will no longer be Greek or Jew, barbarian or Scythian, slave or freeman, husband or wife—when we shall all be as spirits, how could we recognize each other?

"Let us, in the first place, reply, that that which is impossible to man is possible to God; otherwise, blinded by human reasons, we should even disbelieve the resurrection. How, in fact, can a body already in a state of corruption—perhaps devoured by wild beasts, by birds, or by fishes, themselves devoured by others—and that in several ways and at various times successively, be reunited or gathered together on the last day? It will be thus, however, and the hidden power of God will reunite all its scattered parts and raise it up. Then each soul will recognize the body in which it lived.

"But will every soul recognize also the body of its neighbor? We cannot doubt it, unless, at the same time, we doubt the general judgment. For no one can be summoned to judgment without being known, and a person must be known to be judged, according to this expression of Scripture: 'I will

reprove thee and set [thy own transgressions] before thy face.' (Ps. xlix. 21.)

"The value of this reasoning depends upon the following distinction: in the private judgment, we are judged by God alone, but in the general judgment we shall be, in some measure, judged by one another. Whilst the former will manifest the justice of God only to the soul that is judged, the latter will make it evident to every creature. Therefore, all await that great day for 'the revelation of the sons of God' (Rom. viii. 19), which will alter all the estimations of men."

The saint continues in these terms: "This is why, if we do not recognize one another, we shall not be judged; if we are not judged, we shall not be rewarded or punished for that which we shall have done and suffered while we were of the number of the living. If the apostles are not to recognize those whom they will judge, will they see the accomplishment of this promise of the Lord: 'You shall sit on twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel?' (Matt. xix. 28.) If he is not to recognize them in the kingdom of heaven, will the blessed Job be able to receive twice as many children? (Job xlii. 10-13.) For, here below, he received only a part, and in order that the promise made to him may be fully accomplished, is it not a necessity that he should receive the remainder in the life to come? Besides, from these words, 'No brother can redeem, nor shall man redeem' (Ps. xlviii. 8), does not the holy king David suppose a brother to know his brother? From all quarters we can collect arguments and authorities against those who assert that we do not recognize one another in heaven—a senseless assertion, one the impiety of which may be compared to the fables of Origen. For us, my brethren, let us believe still and ever that we shall rise again, we shall be incorruptible, and that we shall know one another, as our first parents knew each other in the earthly Paradise, before the existence of sin, when they were yet exempt from all corruption. Yes, it *must* be believed—the brother will know his brother, the father his children, the wife her husband, the friend his friend. I will

even add, the religious will know the religious, the confessor will know the confessor, the martyr his fellow-soldier, the apostle his colleague in the apostleship—we shall all, all know one another, in order that the habitation of all in God may be rendered more joyous by this blessing, added to so many others —the blessing of mutual recognition!"

The light thrown by Catholic tradition upon this subject is so vivid and constant that it dissipates all the clouds of sophistry and prejudice.

The testimonies from tradition may be divided into two classes—those which simply affirm the fact, and those which draw consolation from it.

Among the works commonly attributed to St. Athanasius, that pure glory of the fourth century, is one which has for title, *Necessary Questions, of which no Christian should be ignorant.* Now, in reply to the twenty-second question we read, "To the souls of the just in heaven God grants a great gift, which is mutual recognition."

In the seventh century Pope St. Gregory the Great, after having related that a religious saw, when dying, the prophets come towards him, and that he addressed them by their names, added: "This example makes us clearly understand how great will be the knowledge which we shall have of one another in the incorruptible life of heaven, since this religious, though still in a corruptible flesh, seemed to recognize the holy prophets, whom, however, he had never seen."

The most illustrious of the abbots of Clairvaux, St. Bernard, also said in the twelfth century: "The blessed are united among themselves by a charity which is so much the greater as they are the nearer to God, who is charity. No envy can throw suspicion into their ranks, for there is nothing in one which is concealed from the other; the all-pervading light of truth permits it not."

Were I to question the theologians of modern times, they would unanimously answer in the affirmative. Let one, taken from the crowd, answer, however, in the name of all. "The

saints," says he, "see and know each other, as is required by the unity of the kingdom and the unity of the city wherein they reside in the company of the one God; they spontaneously reveal to one another their thoughts and their affections, like the members of one family united by a sincere love. Among their fellow-citizens in heaven, they know even those whom they did not know here below, and their appreciation of noble actions leads them to a more complete knowledge of those who performed them."

The greatest saints and the greatest men of the Church have not hesitated to have recourse to this truth as to a never-failing spring, whence to draw the pure waters of heavenly consolation with which they solace the afflicted. Who now, therefore, shall dare again to censure this ardent desire, this sweet hope, as an imperfection?

Have you lost a brother or a sister? Console yourself, then, as St. Ambrose did. "Brother," said he, "since you have preceded me thither, prepare for me a place in that common abode of all, which is for me henceforward the most desirable; and as, here below, everything was in common between us, so in heaven let us remain ignorant of any law of division. I conjure you, keep me not waiting long, so pressing is the desire I experience of rejoining you; help me who am hastening forward, and if I seem to you still to tarry, make me advance; we have never been long separated, but it is you who were in the habit of returning to me. Now that you can no longer return, I will go to you. O my brother! what comfort remains to me but the hope of soon meeting you again? Yes, I comfort myself with the hope that the separation which your departure has caused will not be of long duration, and that by your prayers you will obtain the grace to hasten the coming of him whose regrets for you are so bitter."

Have you lost a son or a daughter? Receive the consolations of a Patriarch of Constantinople addressed to a bereft father. This Patriarch, Photius, can no more be counted amongst great men than amongst saints, as he was the

author of the cruel schism which separates the East and the West. Nevertheless, his opinions only prove the better that, on this point, the Greeks and the Latins entertain the same views. "If," says Photius, "your daughter were to appear to you, and, placing her face, resplendent with glory, against your face, and her hand within yours, thus were to speak to you, would it not be to describe the joys of heaven? Then she would add: 'Why do you grieve, father? I am in Paradise, where felicity is unbounded. You will come some day with my beloved mother, and then you will find that I have not exaggerated the delights of this place, so far will the reality exceed my description. O dearly beloved father! detain me no longer in your arms, but be pleased to permit me to return whither the intensity of my love attracts me.' Let us then banish sorrow," concludes Photius; "for now your daughter is happy in Abraham's bosom. Let us banish sorrow; for it is there that, after a very little time, we shall see her in the ecstasy of joy and delight."

Have you lost your husband? Alas! the mourning garments you so constantly wear show plainly the misfortune that you have sustained; they show, also, how affection has survived the tie broken by death. Seek aid, then, in the consolations so frequently presented by the Church to Christian widows.

St. Jerome wrote to a widow: "Regret your Lucinius as a brother; but rejoice that he reigns with Christ. Victorious and secure of his glory, he looks down upon you from the heights of heaven; he is your support in your works and woes, and he prepares you a place by his side, ever preserving for you the same love and charity which, making him forget the names of husband and of wife, compelled him, during his life, to love you as his sister, and to live with you as a brother. For, in the pure union that chastity forms between two hearts, the difference of sex which constitutes marriage is unknown."

St. Augustine wrote to another widow: "We have not lost

those who leave a world from which we must ourselves depart; but we have sent them before us into that other life, where the better they are known to us, the dearer to us will they become. Your husband knew himself better than you knew him. You saw his face best, but he knew his heart best. When the Lord comes, He will throw light upon everything now enveloped in darkness, and make manifest the thoughts of all. Then neighbor will have nothing to hide from neighbor, nor will any one make a difference between his friend and a stranger—revealing things to the former and concealing them from the latter—since there will then be no strangers. But what will be the nature, what the intensity of the light which will thus illuminate all the secrets buried in the obscurity of our own hearts? Who can say? Who can even conceive it?"

St. John Chrysostom, in one of his homilies on St. Matthew, said, as if to each of his hearers individually: "Do you wish to behold him whom death hath snatched from you? Lead, then, the same life as he in the path of virtue, and you will soon enjoy that blessed sight. But you would wish to see him even here. Ah! who prevents you? It is both easy and allowable, if you are virtuous; for the hope of future goods is more clear than the possession itself."

This sublime orator found, in his own history, all that could make him sympathize with the sorrows of the wife who has lost her husband. The only son of a young woman, weak alike from her age and her sex, and early left a widow to struggle with the world, he had been the confidant of her tears and of her grief, when he made her as though a second time a widow, by escaping from her love to plunge into solitude. He has himself related to us that the pagan rhetorician Libanius, learning that his mother had been bereft of her husband from the age of twenty, and would never be induced to contract another marriage, exclaimed, turning towards his idolatrous hearers: "O ye gods of Greece! what women among those Christians!" Divine Providence found means to supply Chrysostom with an opportunity of exercising

the compassionate feelings of his heart towards the widowed, by consoling another young woman who had only passed five years of her life with her husband, Therasius, one of the principal personages of his time. He wrote two treatises for her, and they are of the number of his most remarkable productions. He says to her, among other comforting things: "If you desire to see your husband, if you wish to enjoy each other's presence, let your life shine with purity like his, and be assured that you will thus enter into the same angelic choir which he has already reached. You will abide with him, not only during five years, as on earth —not only during twenty, a hundred, a thousand, two thousand, ten thousand, or many more years, but during ages without end. Then you will once more find your husband, no longer with that corporal beauty with which he was gifted when he departed, but with a different splendor—beauty of another sort, which will surpass in brilliancy the rays of the sun. If it had been promised to you that the empire of the whole earth should be given to your husband, on condition that during twenty years you should be separated from him, and if, in addition, you had received a pledge that after those twenty years your Therasius should be restored to you, adorned with the diadem and the purple, and you yourself placed in the same rank of honor as he, would you not have resigned yourself to this separation, and easily have preserved continence? You would even have seen in this offer a signal favor, and something worthy of all your desires. Now, therefore, bear with patience the separation which gives your husband the kingdom, not of earth, but of heaven; bear it, that you may find him amongst the blessed inhabitants of Paradise, clad, not with a vesture of gold, but with one of glory and immortality.

"This is why, in thinking of the honors which Therasius enjoys in heaven, you must cease to weep and lament. Live as he lived, and even with more perfection. By this means, after having practiced the same virtues, you will be received

into the same tabernacles, and you can once more be united to him in the eternal ages, not by the tie of marriage, but by another and a better tie. The first unites bodies only, while the second, more pure, more blissful, and more holy, unites soul to soul."

LETTER THIRD.

REPLY TO SOME OBJECTIONS.

Madam: Our faith in any truth solidly established in the Church must not be shaken by one or more objections, the solution of which eludes our observation. Truth is of the Lord, and remaineth for ever, says the Scriptures (Ps. xvi. 2): objections are from man; time changes them, and the breath of science disperses them. Nevertheless, it often happens that a truth, clearly demonstrated, does not penetrate deeply into our souls as long as we feel a difficulty about it to which we do not perceive the reply. Sometimes, even, the objection takes possession of our minds to such a degree as to banish the truth from them. This is what has happened to many persons with regard to the truth of which we are treating. Not knowing how to remove the veil formed by some difficulties which conceal this consoling truth from them, they have denied the recognition of souls in heaven. They have acted with the imprudence of a child, who might say, because unable to dissipate the mist and clouds, that there was no sun.

All the objections made to you, and transmitted by you to me, proceed from this source—the want of a sufficiently grand and just idea of heaven. Many suppose that God would be inclined to erect the edifice of our greatness on indifference or insensibility, to crown us with glory and to satiate us with felicity in the midst of ignorance and darkness. To attach one's self to this idea is to prove that one has not read that prince of Christian poets, who placed his powerful and regulated imagination at the service of faith, and who sang in a language and in a country not altogether foreign to your family. I quote him, not to attribute to

him an authority which he does not possess, but because he very happily expresses the Catholic thought.

"Heaven," says he, "is an admirable and angelic temple, whose only limits are love and light—an intellectual light charged with love, the love of real good filled with joy surpassing all sweetness. The state of beatitude is founded on the act of seeing; that of loving only comes in the second instance. And the joy even of the blessed, like that of the angels, is more or less great accordingly as their vision plunges more or less far into the truth where all intellectual effort is at rest."

Here, then, is the principle of solution for objections—in heaven, which is less a place than a state, all is light, all is love.

By this light the elect, who enjoy the clear vision of God, know, besides the wonders of nature and grace, all that belongs to the particular state of each. Thus, pontiffs see what relates to the government of their churches, and kings that which concerns their kingdoms. It is to be supposed that their life is perfect by reason of the assemblage of all goods; and would it be so without this recognition? We must believe that they see God face to face. Why, in this mirror of the Divinity—always faithfully reflecting, and ever open to their eyes—why should they not see that which concerns and interests them? The blessed have an infused and actual science, which comes to them by means of revelation and illumination, either from God or from Christ, or from the angels and saints higher than themselves in glory. They have also a natural and acquired science, obtained during this life either by theory or by experience, and preserved in heaven. Could they, then, lose in the abode of felicity that acquirement of all others most fit to increase their happiness—the knowledge of the relations and friends whom they possessed here below?

They are ignorant neither of the wants nor of the prayers of their clients in this world. They govern, they direct us,

they intercede for us. St. Gregory of Nazianzen, in ending the eulogium of St. Cyprian, exclaimed: "Oh! from the heights of heaven look down upon us graciously, govern our speech and our lives, feed this virtuous flock or aid its pastor."

In the second book of Machabees (xv. 12, 16) we see Onias and Jeremias, already dead, interested in the fate of the Jews, praying for their deliverance, and giving to Judas the sword to insure the victory. In the Apocalypse (v. 8) we see the blessed offering to the Lord the prayers rising from earth as a perfume; and they know that their persecutors remain unpunished. Why, then, should those who were either their protectors or the objects of their care here below, and who are now their companions in glory, be alone unrecognized? Why this exception so like a chastisement, this impoverishment of the heart, depriving it of some of its holiest affections, to which, perhaps, too, it owes its entrance into the fatherland of charity, or, at least, a more elevated rank in the kingdom of pure light and perfect love.

It is not necessary for the Christian to pass the waters of oblivion to attain eternal repose. The saint in heaven never loses the recollection of the smallest of his triumphs, nor of the most obscure of his merits. That left hand, which at present knoweth not what the right hand doeth (Matt. vi. 3), will know it and eternally rejoice in it in heaven. Here below we die to ourselves, by a forgetfulness which is always on the increase as we advance in virtue; but in heaven we shall rise again to ourselves by the most perfect recollection. All the good we shall have effected will revive in our memory with a freshness and brilliancy that we shall never before have known. We shall preserve the remembrance of our inward and spiritual trials, as well as that of our physical sufferings and of all our labors. How sweet will it be to us then, in thought, to go over all the furrows of time, when the tears of our eyes and the sweat of our limbs fell like a fertilizing dew to enrich the harvest of our eternal merits! But what! could it be that all the happy inhabitants

of Paradise, in their confidential intercourse, would never speak of their past, would leave the greatness and the multitude of their combats on earth unknown, and would not reveal, one to the other, a single circumstance which would tell that here below they were contemporaries, neighbors, relations, friends? Impossible!

Now, in heaven, with science grows charity; for, as the sun sends us, in one and the same ray, two things together, light and heat, so this mutual recognition, which God gives to His elect, is always accompanied by love. And as the nearer the flame the greater the warmth, so the closer we draw to that great God who is a consuming fire (Deut. iv. 24), the more are we loved, the more do we love.

Charity never falleth away, the Apostle has said (I. Cor. xiii. 8); and that charity which dieth not embraces in its unity God, ourselves, and our neighbor. There are not, in fact, two or three virtues of charity, but only one. If, then, the charity of the just man who dies goes up to heaven with him—if it shines with a more dazzling light on the cloudless horizon of the blessed eternity, like a star which, as it rises, increases in splendor, why should that just man cease to burn with the same fire for all those whom he loved with a holy love on earth? Why, when he loves his God more, when he loves himself, shall he not love his neighbor with increased affection? The holy Abbot of Clairvaux mourned his brother Gerard with wondrous tenderness. One of his sermons on the Canticle of Canticles is not much else than the funeral oration of this beloved brother. What does he there say? Listen and receive consolation: "The more we are united to God, the fuller we are of love. Now, if God cannot know anguish Himself, He can and does commiserate ours; for to pity the wretched and to pardon the guilty is a thing peculiar to Him. You must, then, brother, be alive to the sufferings of others, since you are intimately united to Divine mercy. Therefore your affection for us, far from being diminished, has doubtless attained perfection, and in putting on God you have not laid aside your

solicitude for us, since He Himself hath care of us (Pet. v. 9). You will have rejected that which was weakness, but not that which was tenderness or compassion. In fine, since 'charity never falleth away' (I. Cor. xii. 8), you will never forget me."

The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas of Aquino, teaches that the blessed love one another so much the more as they are the more united to God; whilst on earth we love one another more or less accordingly as we are more or less united with one another by the different ties which are necessary or permitted. However, though we have not to provide in heaven for each other's wants, every soul will retain particular affection for those who were united to it on earth; and will continue to love them in several different manners—on account of relationship, of friendship, of connection, of benefits granted or received, of compatriotism or of similarity of vocation. For no motive of honorable love will cease to act upon the heart of one admitted to the joys of heaven.

God Himself said to St. Catherine of Sienna: "Though all my elect are indissolubly united together by a perfect charity, there is, nevertheless, a singular communication, a joyous and holy familiarity between those who have mutually loved in this world. Through this mutual love they endeavored to grow in my grace, advancing from virtue to virtue; by it one was to the other a means of salvation; by it they helped one another to glorify me in themselves and in their neighbor. This love, therefore, is not in any degree diminished between them in the life everlasting; on the contrary, it brings them a greater abundance of spiritual joy and content."

Without this admirable harmony of knowledge and love, heaven would be devoid of joy. If you light in it only the lamp of science and not the flames of charity, jealousies will spread their snares as here below. Think of love in heaven as of a sightless man rushing in his darkness in pursuit of an object, and it will soon prove itself a prey to the gloomiest regrets. Without *love*, nothing would counterbalance

inequality; for the soul would cease to possess in others that which was wanting to itself. Without *light*, there would be no consolation for the unhappy end of a beloved being, faithless to his assignation because blind both to the sweet ways of an amiable Providence and to the decrees of eternal justice.

But to unite the perfection of science and the perfection of love, is to exclude from heaven selfish jealousies and sour repinings.

The saints enjoy the gifts they possess, and crave not for those denied to them. Such even as passed a part of their lives in sin do not the less, for that reason, enjoy unmixed happiness, though they may, perhaps, be less elevated than others in glory. The great Bishop of Hippo said to virgins: "The multitude who will see you follow the Lamb without being able to accompany you, will not be jealous. While sharing your rejoicing, they will have in you what they have not in themselves. No doubt, they cannot sing that new canticle (Apoc. xiv. 3) peculiarly your own; but they can hear it, and rejoice in your immense happiness." He said again: "In the blessed city, none of those who are lower will envy those who are higher, just as now the angels do not envy the archangels. No one wishes to be that which God has not made him, any more than in our body the eye covets the favor of being the finger. To whomsoever God has given lesser gifts, He adds the gift of not wishing for more."

If it be distasteful to you to consult, on this matter, the too serious books of the doctors, take the *Divina Commedia*, and read a page of that poem, only the more pleasing to you because a large proportion of it is devoted to theology. In his charming journey to Paradise the author asked a soul he met on its lowest step if it did not desire to rise higher, in order to see and to love more. "Brother," replied the soul, "there is a virtue in charity which appeases our desires, and, causing us to desire only that which we have, prevents our thirsting for aught else. It is even necessary

to our beatific existence to keep ourselves to the Divine will, so that all our wills shall form but one. And although in the mansions of our Father we be housed at different stages, the arrangement is one that pleases all in the kingdom, as it pleases the King, who absorbs our will in His. In His will is our peace. His will is that sea toward which take their course both things created and those effected by nature." "It was then clear to me," concludes the poet, "how every place in heaven is Paradise, though the grace of supreme good is not showered down everywhere alike."

Heaven is light; say not, therefore, the perfection which renders a created being pleasing to us, being found in its plenitude in God, shall we turn our eyes from the focus of eternal splendors, the ocean of infinite perfections, to fix them upon an isolated ray, a slender stream?

The blessed never need turn their looks away from the Creator to observe a creature. It is in Him, it is in the Word that they will contemplate, at the same time, the luminous focus and the rays, the prolific source and the streams. "It is in the Divine Word," wrote the author of the *Life of the Predestined*, "that we shall see truth unadorned, divested of those veils which here never leave us a clear view of all its parts. There will then remain no more doubt in heaven, no more uncertainty, no more shade, no more twilight, and no more utter darkness. It is in the Word that the predestined will behold, as in an admirable mirror, that great scene of the world unfolding itself in the particular account of every transaction. It is there that he will learn the consequences of the eternal counsels of God in the interests of His own glory. We shall there discern in one view the past, the present, and the future, and we shall walk by the light of this view in the broad paths of eternity, without wandering from the direct way and losing ourselves. We shall there read the universal record of all times, and of the extraordinary events of each succeeding age, not merely in the exterior world, but also in that inward world concealed

in the depths of the human heart. It is in this book, then to be opened to the elect, that we shall have the satisfaction of studying the secret history of the heavenly Jerusalem, containing the mystery of the salvation of each *predestined*, and the particulars of the conduct of God towards men in the admirable design of their predestination."

Heaven is love; say not then, there is no further need of friends—the saints in ecstasy forget even their relations; and besides, the greater part of our affections have their source in a purely natural cause, no longer to exist in eternity. A poor philosophy! which confines the sentiments of the heart within the limits of present utility, and comprehends not that the principal benefit of friendship is the love itself, or the intercourse established between two persons sincerely attached to one another! How many wise monarchs have considered themselves more happy in possessing a friend than a kingdom!

I do not deny that the saints, in certain moments of spiritual consolation, and chiefly in ecstasy or ravishment, have banished all thought of their nearest relations, and of the most virtuous persons: I do not deny that they have lost all feeling for any but God. But they were on the earth and in the midst of trial; they were painfully performing the Master's precept according to the first words of the text, "Leave house, brethren, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, lands, for my name's sake"; they had not yet seen the fulfillment of the prophecy contained in the second part—"and receive a hundredfold, and possess life everlasting" (Matt. xix. 29). Heaven is not a forced and transitory state, nor one of ecstasy; it is the permanent city where we have no longer either mortifications to practice nor sacrifices to make in order to mount higher, but where we find in God all that we had left for God. He is the end of our journey and of our combats, and in Him we repose in the tranquil possession of an eternal reward. The Lord there lavishes on all lights that He denies to His greatest servants on earth; and He there gives to charity for our neighbor a liberty of expansion which Christian or cloistral

prudence must often restrain in this world. Everything that is good in nature will always exist. Nature will be for glory in heaven what it is here for grace—the necessary foundation. She is a wild plant; but grace is inserted into her like a Divine graft. This graft produces, first, flowers tinted with the colors of Jesus Christ, and shedding His sweet odor during time. She next produces those fruits of salvation which will be the glory of the blessed throughout eternity. The wild stock with the graft, the entire tree with its fruit, will be transplanted into heaven. We shall even have, in addition to all the faculties of our soul, all the senses of our body without any deficiency. He who dies a little child will rise again a full-grown man. You were heard to lament when death laid low one of your daughters, still an infant in the cradle; you will be heard rejoicing and glorifying the Lord when you meet this cherished little one again on a throne near Him, having all at once obtained a maturity without decline, eternally beautiful, eternally young. In taking her to Himself, God has assumed the care of bringing her up. He has educated her Himself. Fear not that He will have left no place in her heart for you. On earth, she could neither know nor love you; but in heaven, on account of that first natural connection, God will enable her to know her mother, and will give her filial piety as a supernatural virtue.

Heaven is love and light; say not, then, "Immense will be the affliction of a saint at the thought of a relation or a friend who never will join him."

From the heights of glory we shall better perceive the horror of sin, the obstinacy of the sinner, and the justice of his condemnation. God, the sun of the moral world, is the centre whose attraction, freely accepted, keeps our souls in the orbit of salvation, in spite of the passions ever stimulating us to diverge. The saints witness with attention, from the eternal hills, the vicissitudes of this struggle, which is to lead those whom they love to heaven or to hell. They long to see that Divine attraction, itself the very power of mercy,

acting upon the sinner and subduing his insensate or guilty resistance. But, at length, they see that obstinate prodigal, that man who crucifies Jesus a second time, voluntarily yield to the allurement of sin, to the impulse of passion, and altogether quit the orbit of salvation. Like a shattered star cast into space, it wanders further and further from its centre, and thus reaches, through perdition, an infinite distance from God. Now, the affection of the blessed for the souls on earth is weakened in proportion to their separation from the Sovereign Good; and for those who are lost, it becomes totally extinct. Besides, they will what God wills, for they love only what He Himself loves. This is why the Lord said to a great saint: "The inhabitants of heaven have their desires fully accomplished, and are never at variance with me. Their free will is so bound by charity that they cannot desire anything but what I have desired. Their will is so conformed and united to mine, that the father and mother who behold their children in hell, that the children who behold their father and mother delivered over to eternal sufferings, grieve not at that sight. They even rejoice in seeing those parents or those children punished by my justice who persisted in being my enemies."

But madam, I think I hear you repeat to me what you have so often said: "How can we console ourselves in *this world* for the misfortune of seeing a beloved person die without any apparent reconciliation with God?"

This question goes a little out of my subject; yet I will not leave it unanswered. I shall, therefore, add a few pages.

APPENDIX TO LETTER THIRD.

LET US PRAY FOR SINNERS EVEN AFTER THEIR UNHAPPY DEATH.

Madam: The Church condemns none to eternal torments. She publishes decrees to declare that one man is in heaven; she has never published any to declare that another is in hell.

I am happy to know that in reading a work of a deservedly high reputation you particularly remarked these lines: "The Rev. Father de Ravignan loved to speak of those mysteries of grace called into existence, as he believed, at the hour of death. His feeling seems to have been that a great number of sinners are converted at the last moment, and expire reconciled to God. There are in certain deaths hidden mysteries of mercy and strokes of grace, where the eye of man sees only strokes of justice. By a flash of light God sometimes reveals Himself to souls whose greatest misfortune was not to have known Him; and the latest breath may be a sigh calling for pardon, understood by Him who hears it, and who sounds the heart."

Marshal Exelmans, who was precipitated into the grave by a fall from his horse, had neglected the practice of religion. He had promised to have recourse to confession, but had not time to do so. Nevertheless, the very day of his death, a person habituated to heavenly communications seemed to hear an inward voice saying: "Who can tell the extent of my mercy? Can any one fathom the depths of the sea, and calculate the amount of its waters? Much will be forgiven to certain souls that have remained in ignorance of much." How explain these strokes of grace? By the value of a soul purchased by

the blood of Jesus Christ, and by the mercy which knows no limits: by some good work, almsdeed, or prayer of the sinner's during life; by the invisible ministry of the guardian angel, ever prompt to act, and ever ready to save his charge; by the preceding prayers of the just on earth and of the saints in heaven; but, more than all, by the intercession of the Virgin Mary; in fine, by the prayers offered up for sinners after their death, even though they may have given no sign of repentance.

It is to the explanation of his last point that I shall here confine myself.

You read with pleasure, in the work I have just mentioned, those lines of the holy religious written to comfort a queen whose son was killed by a fall from his carriage: "Christians beneath a law of hope, no less than one of faith and love, we must unceasingly raise our thoughts from the abyss of our afflictions to the heights of the infinite goodness of our Saviour. As long as a single breath of life remains, no barrier is placed between the soul and grace. We must, therefore, always hope, and make humble and persevering intercession to the Lord. We cannot know to what degree it will be acceptable. Great saints and great doctors have gone very far in speaking of this powerful efficacy of prayers for beloved souls, whatever may have been their end. We shall some day understand these ineffable wonders of the Divine mercy, which we must never cease to invoke with the utmost confidence." Since the Rev. Father de Ravignan appeals to the saints and the doctors, I will produce for you the testimony of one who was both a great doctor and a great saint.

The most eloquent of the archbishops of Constantinople, while arguing to prove that we must not mourn our dead with excess, but rather aid them by our prayers and works, imagines that one of his audience interrupts him, exclaiming: "But I mourn this dear deceased because he died a sinner." What is the reply of St. John Chrysostom? "Is not this a vain pretext?—for if such be the cause of your tears, why did you not make more effort to convert him whilst he lived?

And if he really died a sinner, ought you not to rejoice that he can now no more increase the number of his sins? You must, in the first place, go to his help, as far as you are able, not with tears, but with prayers, supplications, alms and sacrifices. All these things are indeed not idle inventions. It is not without necessity that in the Divine mysteries we commemorate the dead; it is not fruitlessly that we approach the altar with prayers for them to the Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world; but by these means is consolation showered upon their souls. If Job could purify his children by offering sacrifice for them, how much more must He whom we offer up for our dead give them relief?

"Is it not one of God's ways to do good to some out of regard for others? Let us, then, show ourselves eager to aid our dear deceased, and let us earnestly and perseveringly pray for them. The Mass is a general expiation by which all may profit. In the Mass, therefore, we pray for the whole universe, and we mention the dead with the martyrs, confessors and priests of the Church; for we are all one body, though some members are more illustrious than others. It may be, even, that we can obtain for our deceased a complete pardon through the prayers and the merits offered for them by those in whose company they are named. Why, then, are you still in such grief? Why this despondency, these lamentations? May not so great a grace be obtained for him whom you have lost?"

We find, in the celebrated revelations of St. Gertrude, an example confirmatory of this doctrine and placing it in a new light.

A person had been informed of the death of one of her relations in Gertrude's presence. This person, fearing that the deceased had not died in a state of grace, showed very great affliction. She experienced such trouble as to excite the emotion of the saint, who proposed to pray to God for the departed soul. She began by saying to our Lord: "Thou couldst have inspired me with the thought and granted me

the grace to pray for this soul, without being compelled to do so by tenderness or compassion." Jesus answered: "I take singular pleasure in the prayers addressed to me for the dead, when natural feeling is added to the good-will which renders them meritorious, and when both concur to give this work of mercy all the plenitude and perfection it is capable of receiving." The abbess having afterwards prayed long for this soul, became aware of its lamentable state; for it appeared to her frightfully deformed, as black as coal, and resembling a a body writhing with intense pain. No spirits were, however, to be seen tormenting it; but evidently its former sins were acting as its executioners. "Lord," exclaimed the charitable religious, "wilt Thou not be propitiated by my prayers, and pardon this man?" "I would, for the love of thee," replied the Divine Saviour, "have pity not only on this soul, but on a million of others. Wilt thou, then, that I pardon him all his sins, and that I deliver him from every sort of penalty?" "Perhaps," said the saint, "this may not be in conformity with the requirements of Thy justice." "It would not be inconsistent with them," added our Saviour, "if thou wert to ask me for it with confidence; for my Divine light, piercing into the future, having made known to me that thou wouldst offer this prayer for him, I placed good dispositions in his heart, to prepare him for the enjoyment of the fruits of thy charity."

O consoling words! First, by foresight of our future prayers, God deigns to grant good dispositions to the dying sinner, which insure the salvation of his soul; then, in consideration of our present prayers, He consents to deliver this soul from every sort of penalty and to withdraw it from the expiatory flames of purgatory.

The last acknowledgment of the Saviour to his virginal spouse is but the particular application of a general principle. Before men could have cast their looks down upon the crib and have raised them to Calvary, before the Sun of Redemption had shown on this lowly vale of our exile,

they could already be guided by its light and animated by its heat. Why? Because God the Father, from the summit of the eternal hills, already contemplated the prayers, the sufferings, the virtues, the merits of His only Son, who was to become incarnate for the salvation of the world.

This truth it is, well understood and carried into practice, that can best render grief productive of virtue. "All my life is now in this," said the person who drew my attention to the above passage in the revelations of St. Gertrude: "Before my husband died, God knew what I should be willing to do for him." She made an entire sacrifice of herself; she consecrated her whole being to the Lord, taking for her motto, "Pray, suffer, act;" and the Lord consoled her with the gift of the sick poor of earth, and the suffering souls of purgatory for her family.

Pray, then, and obtain prayers; God, whose mercy is high and vast as the heavens (Ps. lvi. 2; cvii. 5), knew at the moment when your friend or your relation was about to die what prayers you would say for him to-day, to-morrow, and after following the advice contained in this page. Pray, therefore, I repeat, and obtain prayers; your prayers, while consoling and sanctifying you for the present, have already contributed in the past to save those whom you love.

LETTER FOURTH.

RELATIONS KNOW EACH OTHER; OR, THE FAMILY IN HEAVEN.

Madam: You have a particular wish to know what becomes of the family in heaven, if God reconstructs it, and if the hope of enjoying the society of your relations is a consolation which you may indulge in without fear, without scruple, and without imperfection.

Can you doubt it, when so many holy personages assert it by their example as well as by their words.

God has crowned the Christian family with glory and honor, and He causes to shine on its brow the reflection of the three principal mysteries of our religion. How does it commence? With a sacrament—the sacred sign of the union of God's word with human nature, of the union of Jesus Christ with the Church, of the very union of God with the just man. Who has said so? A great Pope, Innocent III.

Then how does it continue? Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for her; women, love your husbands, as the Church loves Jesus Christ and delivers herself up to Him. The great apostle, St. Paul, has said it (Epist. v. 35). And now you perceive how it ends. By connections whose origin the angels may envy us, so much do they recall those of the Trinity, and of such noble joys are they productive; for man is of man, as God is of God. Who has said it? A great doctor, St. Thomas of Aquino. But, could it be that death had more power to destroy this masterpiece than virtue to preserve it? And, since love is strong as death (Cant. viii. 6), would not the charity of God, which created the family—would not the charity of man, which sanctifies its use,

reconstruct for ever, in heaven, that which death has destroyed for a time on earth?

Tertullian said: "In eternal life God will no more separate those whom He united than He permits their separation in this world below. The wife will belong to her husband, and the husband will still possess the principle thing in marriage, the heart. The want of all carnal tie will be no loss to him. Is not a husband most honored when most pure?"

He who gave us this precept: "Let no man separate those whom God hath joined together" (Matt. xiv. 6), also sets us the example. The Word contracted with humanity a Divine marriage; did He repudiate His spouse when ascending into heaven? He made her, on the contrary, sit with Him at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. The Man-God has a mother, blessed among women. Did He disdain to make her share His glory? No; after having associated her with His passion on earth, He made her take part in the joys of His resurrection and the glories of His triumph, by assuming her body into heaven after Him, as well as her soul. Jesus Christ had given the name of brother to some men; later did He disown them? Not so; He knew His apostles by the martyrdom they had endured for Him; and in the celestial court He makes Himself known to them by the splendor with which He Himself surrounds them.

But, will not the Son of God, who has been pleased thus to reconstruct around Him His family by nature and His family by adoption, in the same way reconstruct, in Paradise, that Christian and religious family which belongs to you, and also to Him? He will; and heaven will present a scene not less touching than admirable. As the First Person of the blessed Trinity bending over the Second, says: "Thou art my Son, this day I have begotten thee" (Acts xiii. 33); and as the Second says to the First, with the accents of filial piety, "Father, just Father, holy Father, may those whom thou hast given me be one, as we also are one—I in thee, and thou in me, and I in them" (John xvii. 11, 22, 25);

so will one human being, bending over another, say with tenderness, "My son, my child, my daughter," and from the heart of the latter will escape this exclamation, "Father!" As the Son of God rejoices that He can say to a woman, "Thou art my Mother," so also will numbers of the elect overflow with rejoicing as they exclaim to a woman, "Mother!"

Now, if it were true that in heaven the members of the same family did not know one another, Jesus would no longer know Mary, or be known by her. Is not this horrible to think and to say? And was not a pious author better inspired who wrote: "The most holy Virgin preserves all her Mother's authority over the body of her Son, our Lord, even after the resurrection and ascension; for her right is inalienable and perpetual. After having taken pleasure during His mortal life in submitting to Mary, Jesus still takes pleasure in showing Himself her Son in the immortal life of the blessed, and in acknowledging her for His mother. We have the proof of it in those numerous apparitions wherein He has shown Himself in the form of a child in the arms of its mother, and has even given Himself to some saints by her virginal hands. In glory, souls have a continual care of their relations, and particularly of their children, who are a portion of themselves, and, so to say, their second selves. It is, then, an undoubted fact, that the Mother of Jesus has her thoughts perfectly fixed on all that concerns the body of her dear Son, in the obscurity of the sacrament as well as in the light of glory. From the heights of heaven, her eyes and her heart follow Him in every place in which He finds Himself on earth by means of the Eucharistic consecration."

This certainty of a special union with our relations in a blessed eternity is a consolation so pure and so sweet, that the saints themselves have made it the subject of their delight. From every point of the compass, from the east, from the west, from the north, from the south, there come voices, bearing testimony to this truth.

Germany offers us among many others the instance of the blessed Henry Suso, a religious of the order of St. Dominic. He was named Henri de Berg; but he preferred the name of Suso, as having been his mother's, in order to do honor to her piety, and to be reminded of her without ceasing.

This virtuous mother died on Good Friday, at the same hour as our Lord. Henry was then studying at Cologne. She appeared to him during the night, quite resplendent with glory. "My son," said she, "love Almighty God with all thy strength, and be well convinced that He will never abandon thee in all thy works and difficulties. I have quitted the world; but this is not to die, since I live happily in Paradise, where Divine mercy has rewarded the immense love I bore to the passion of our Saviour, Jesus Christ." "O my holy—O my tender mother!" exclaimed Henry, "love me ever in heaven as you did on earth, and never abandon me in my afflictions!"

The blessed spirit disappeared; but her son remained, his soul overflowing with consolation.

Another time he saw the soul of his father, who, while living, had had a great love of the world. He appeared to his son in much suffering and affliction, making him thereby understand the excruciating pains he endured in purgatory, and asking for the help of his prayers. Henry shed such burning tears that he soon delivered his father's soul, when it came to thank him for its happiness.

Gaul might, almost as much as Italy, lay claim to the Angelic Doctor. The soul of St. Thomas of Aquino was not dried up by science; but charity kept a prominent place in his heart for his brothers and sisters according to nature.

While he was in Paris, one of his sisters appeared to him to tell him that she was in purgatory. She asked for a certain number of Masses, hoping that the goodness of God and the intercession of her brother would deliver her from the flames. The saint conjured the students to pray and to say Masses for the soul of his sister. Afterwards, when he was at Rome, she

again appeared to him, informed him that she was delivered from purgatory, and enjoyed the glory of heaven by virtue of the Masses he had himself said and of those that he had caused to be said. "And, sister, do you know nothing about me?" exclaimed St. Thomas. "As for you, brother," replied she, "your life is agreeable to the Lord. You will soon come to meet us; but you will have a diadem of glory more beautiful than ours. Only keep what you have acquired." "And my brother Landulph, where is he?" "He is in purgatory." "And my brother Raynald?" "He is in Paradise, among the martyrs, because he died in the service of the holy Church."

In Spain we meet the illustrious reformer of Carmel, the seraphic Teresa of Jesus. Behind the rails of her convent, in spite of the austerity of her life, she cultivated the purest family affections; and she hoped that God, who gives a hundredfold more to whomsoever quits all for His name (Matt. xix. 29), would in heaven restore her beloved relations to her a hundredfold, by multiplying her love for them in the same proportion.

One evening Teresa felt herself so ill that she thought she could not meditate, and she had taken her rosary to pray vocally, without any effort of mind. What will our Lord do to console her? She herself informs us in these words: "Some instants had hardly elapsed when a ravishment, with irresistible power, carried me out of myself. I was transported in spirit to heaven, and the first persons whom I saw were my father and mother."

God is pleased to take the heart of the Christian spouse as He took the loaves in the desert (Mark vi. 41), to bless and to multiply it, as many times as He gives her children who hunger for His love, and whom she feeds with it, for the glory of the Lord, as well as for her own felicity.

St. Teresa commends a pious lady who, to obtain a family, practiced great devotions, and offered fervent prayers to heaven. "To give life to children who, after her death, would praise

God, was the petition she presented, without ceasing, to His Divine bounty. Her heart suffered in feeling that, when she would have breathed her last, she would not live again in Christian children, and, through them, continue to offer a tribute of blessing and praise to the Lord."

The austere Carmelite says, from herself: "I sometimes think, Lord, that thou art pleased to grant to those who love thee the precious favor of providing them, in their children, with fresh means of serving thee." She says again: "I often reflect on this subject—when these children shall enjoy eternal felicity, and perceive that they owe it to their mother, with what thanksgiving will they not prove their gratitude to her, and with what double joy will not the heart of that mother beat at the sight of their happiness!"

This is what has been thought and said of the family by saints who have remained virgins before, as well as after, their entrance into religious life. Beware, then, of thinking that the child who, from his earliest years, consecrates himself to God forever, forgets his father, his mother, his brothers, and sisters. On the contrary, his heart becomes the very focus of charity. If this precious treasure were to escape from all other hearts through the breach made by the passions, leaving only indifference and forgetfulness behind, his heart would preserve it and send it unceasingly through the channels of virtue. The oldest, as the youngest, religious is often heard, by his good angel, during the silence of sacrifice and of prayer, saying to the Lord, "Memento, remember my relations who are already dead, and bless them all beyond anything that my heart can desire."

Happy mother, who had it in your power to give two sons and two daughters to Jesus for the glory of His name and the love of His heart! fear not that those children will be faithless to the fourth commandment. The members of religious orders —fruits detached from the bough—are often directed, by their tendency to perfect charity, towards the tree that bore them, to draw upon it honors and benediction. The many benefits,

temporal or spiritual, obtained by them from God for their families, will never be known till they all meet in heaven.

But I forget—the saints who were not always virgins spoke the same language as the others.

In Africa, behold St. Cyprian, who was reared in paganism, and only embraced continence after his baptism. Become Bishop of Carthage, and destined to martyrdom, it fell to him to console the faithful threatened with death by an epidemic illness. What said he then? He addressed to them words that the Roman Church recalls to her priests during the octave of the solemn day on which we celebrate all the saints: "Since we live here below as strangers and travelers, let us sigh for the day that will restore us to our home, and give us back our place in the kingdom of heaven. Who, being in exile, would not long to return to his country? Who, hastening home by sea, would not desire a favorable breeze to waft him the sooner to the embraces of his dear ones? Heaven is our home, and the patriarchs, our ancestors, are there before us. Let us hasten, then, to see our country and to rejoin our ancestors. Many who are dear to us are expecting us; a considerable number of relations, brothers, children, are anxiously watching for our arrival. They are certain now of their own eternal happiness, and they are full of solicitude for our salvation. To see, to embrace them—what joy both for them and for us!"

Among the Greeks at Constantinople one of the most intrepid champions of orthodoxy against the Iconoclasts of the East, St. Theodore, had first been married; then his wife had, like him, embraced religious life, and their children had also entered a monastery.

He wrote to a father, all of whose sons were dead: "Your children are not lost, but they are safely waiting for you; and as soon as you will have reached the term of this temporal life, you will see them again in joy and blessedness."

To a widow he wrote: "The God who drew you from nothing to give you existence, the God who brought you to the bloom of youth to unite you to an illustrious man, will

easily unite you to him once more by the resurrection. Look upon his departure, then, as a journey. Would you not resign yourself to it if ordered by a king of earth? Resign yourself to it now, therefore, since you know that He who has ordered this journey is the true King, the sole King of the universe. I exhort you to this; and my hope is that you will meet your husband again in the day of the Lord."

And to a man who had just lost his wife he said: "It is to God that you have sent on before so worthy a spouse. Is not this enough for your consolation? And what ought you now to seek? You ought to try to recover in heaven, at the moment fixed by Divine Providence, this excellent companion, who will rejoice with you during ages without end in the participation of ineffable blessings."

No doubt, those who were married on earth, in heaven are like the angels (Matt. xxii. 30). But though far removed from all the pleasures of sense, they will enjoy for ever the purer ones of the spirit, and will remember that they were, here below, not only one heart and one soul, like the first Christians (Acts vi. 32), but also one flesh, like our first parents (Gen. ii. 24; Matt. xix. 6).

In Italy, St. Frances of Rome was married, had children, and when she became a widow she entered religious life.

One morning, towards the dawn of day, the saint had just awoke; she had first raised her heart to God, and next her eyes had fallen on her daughter, still a child, who lay sleeping not far from her. Suddenly her room was filled with an unusual light, in the midst of which appeared one of her sons, a year deceased. He was of the same height, the same figure as when living; but his beauty was incomparably more exquisite. His name was Evangelista. This son, always so loving, approached his mother and saluted her with profound respect and charming grace. What did Frances then do, transported as she was with unspeakable joy? She did that which every mother would have done; she opened her arms to take this dear child once more to her heart.

And what did she say to him? She said, as every mother would have said, "Dost thou, dear son, preserve in heaven the memory of thy mother?" "O mother!" answered Evangelista, "see if I think of thee and if I love thee. Dost thou not perceive another child standing near me, whose beauty is superior to mine? He is my companion in the choir of the archangels, for I am in heaven, in the second choir of the inferior hierarchy. This archangel is placed higher in glory than I; nevertheless, God gives him to thee, God leaves him with thee to take my place beside thee, and that of my little sister Agnes, as her soul is soon to flee to Paradise and to enter with me into the enjoyment of eternal felicity. This heavenly spirit will console thee in thy pilgrimage, will accompany thee wherever thou goest, and will be found at thy side day and night, so that thou mayest see him with thine own eyes."

This colloquy lasted an hour; and before he departed, the child asked his mother's permission to reascend to heaven, leaving the archangel in her company.

If you have read the life of St. Frances of Rome, given to the public by a noble and zealous Catholic of your own province, you cannot be ignorant of the important part played in the career of this holy woman by the archangel, for whom she was indebted to the prayers of a son who had preceded her to the home of all.

God is always admirable in His saints (Psalms lxvii. 36). The incident now related shows that He is not less so in the delicacy of the consolations with which His heart inundates theirs, than in the greatness of the trials and of the miracles he employs to lead them to perfection, or to render their sanctity as evident as a burning light. And more; He is not satisfied with consoling them by the joys of the reconstructed family, but He goes further, and multiplies their consolation by the charms of friendship transferred to heaven.

LETTER FIFTH.

FRIENDS RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER; OR, FRIENDSHIP IN HEAVEN.

Madam: Beyond the narrow limits of the family, affection may extend within a wide circle of friendship. The Man-God was pleased to have friends on earth, and He has deigned to assemble them around Him in heaven. Following His example, the holiest persons have given free vent to the tenderest feelings of their hearts: all have had friends, chosen out of a thousand, and all have rejoiced in the thought of knowing and loving them in eternal repose.

They have also written admirable pages on true and perfect friendship, a sentiment altogether spiritual. I will merely bring forward one, quite to the purpose. It is by the blessed Ethelred or Aelred, contemporary of St. Bernard, and abbot of the order of Citeaux, in England. It is a conversation between two friends.

ETHELRED.—Let us suppose that there is but you in this world, and that all the delights, added to all the riches, of the universe are before you—gold, silver, precious stones, cities surrounded by walls, camps fortified with towers, vast edifices, works of sculpture and of painting. Let us again suppose that you are established in the primitive state, so that all creatures are subject to you as to the first man. Would all these things, I ask, be agreeable to you without a companion?

WALTER.—No, assuredly not.

ETHELRED.—But what if you had only one companion, whose language, habits, heart and mind were unknown to you?

Walter.—If I could not obtain from him some sign of friendship, I would rather remain alone than have such a companion.

Ethelred.—But if there was one whom you loved as yourself, and whose affection equaled your own, would not all things before seemingly bitter at once become sweet and pleasant?

Walter.—Quite true.

Ethelred.—In this consists, then, the great and admirable felicity we hope to enjoy in heaven. God will effect between Himself and the creatures whom He will have raised to Paradise, between the degrees or the ranks He will have established, between all the elect whom He will have chosen, such great love, such great charity, that each will love all others as himself. From this mutual love, it will result that every individual soul will rejoice in the felicity of its companions in glory as in its own. The beatitude of each will thus be in common to all, and the total amount of these beatitudes will be the property of each. There no thought will be hidden, no feeling disguised. Such is the true and eternal friendship which commences on earth, and is carried on in heaven; it belongs on earth to the few, because the good are few; but in heaven it belongs to all, for all there are good. Here it is necessary to try our friends, as the wise and the foolish are mixed; but on high they need not be tried, since they enjoy an angelic and almost divine perfection. Let us, then, make friends whom we may love as ourselves, who will tell us all their secrets, to whom we shall tell ours, who will be firm, stable and constant in all things. For is there, think you, one among mortals who would not thus be loved?

Walter.—I think not.

Ethelred.—If you saw some one living amidst numbers of men, and holding them all in suspicion, ever fearing them as if they were disposed to attempt his life, loving no

one, and believing himself beloved by none, would you not look upon such a man as very unhappy?

WALTER.—Yes, as the most unhappy of men.

ETHELRED.—You will not, therefore, deny that the happiest is he who abides and reposes in the hearts of those with whom he lives, who loves them all, and is beloved by all, his most sweet tranquillity undiminished by suspicion or by fear.

WALTER.—Very good—very true.

ETHELRED.—If it be difficult for all to obtain this happiness at present, the future, at least, has it in reserve for us, and in heaven we shall esteem ourselves so much the happier as we shall have had, on earth, a greater number of such friends. Two days ago I was walking round the monastery while the brethren, seated together, formed the most pleasing circle; and, as if I had been in the midst of the delights of Paradise, I was admiring the leaves, the flowers, the fruits of those mystic trees. Not perceiving in that number one whom I did not love, no one of whose love I did not feel assured, my soul was filled to overflowing with a joy so great that it surpassed all the pleasures of this world. I knew that the feelings of my heart stirred in theirs, as did also those of their hearts in mine, and I said with the Prophet: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm cxxxii. i).

These sentiments of the blessed Ethelred justify the following words of a more recent author: "Ah! would that I could find expressions sufficiently tender and strong to describe the sweets of those chaste and spiritual friendships which will exist in heaven, where the spirit only will love; and to explain those most holy feelings of tenderness that the blessed will experience towards one another, with the loving communications wherein the flesh and the senses will have no part. What pleasure, what joy, should I not cause such pure souls as aspire only to those heavenly affections

of which the great felicity of our future life will be in part composed; because they will be mingled with the enjoyment of God Himself, and of the ineffable suavities of His Divine embraces! Are there any delights of the senses that can deserve to enter into comparison with these pleasures? If a pure, innocent, sincere, and faithful friendship often suffices to sweeten the whole of this life, what fruit may we not expect to derive from such friendships of the spirit as are to be formed in heaven, accompanied by all these qualities! And, if a safe and faithful friend can make another man most happy even here, what will be the happiness of life everlasting, when all the blessed will be true friends!"

Now, one of the joys of these true friends will be their mutual recognition. St. Ambrose thought so when he commented on the following words of our Saviour: "I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of my Father I have made known to you" (St. John xv. 15). By these words our Lord has given the model of friendship for us to copy. We must reveal to our friends all the secrets of our hearts, and we must not remain in ignorance of theirs. A friend conceals nothing. If he is sincere, he opens his mind as our Saviour disclosed the mysteries of His Father.

Thus also thought that humble and holy priest of our own days, who was a great prophet without going beyond his poor little village, where multitudes visited him living, and visit him still after death. Here are some of his consoling expressions: "With whom shall we be in heaven? With God, who is our father; with Jesus Christ, who is our brother; with the Blessed Virgin, who is our mother; with the angels and saints, who are our friends. A king, in his last moments, said with deep regret: 'Must I then quit my kingdom to go into a country where no one is known to me?' He had never thought of the happiness of heaven. We must make friends there henceforward, in order that we may meet them after death; and then we shall not be afraid, like that king of not knowing any one in the other world."

Has not our Saviour Himself said: "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings"? (St. Luke xvi. 3).

It appears to you, perhaps, that till now I have spoken only of that general friendship which will exist amongst all the saints in heaven, as it exists on earth, amongst all the good who know and appreciate each other; and still more, amongst all the religious who live in the same community. But does not what I have said apply with greater force to a special and holy friendship sometimes seen to blossom during time between two hearts, by virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ?

Firmly believe that such a flower, after having formed your delight on earth, will shed its odors in a blessed eternity, to perfume the celestial court, and to give ever new consolation to the elect.

The saints even considered the possibility of such persistence as an essential of friendship. Who does not know that saying of St. Jerome, "The friendship was never true that can have an end"? The friendship which cannot be eternal has no real existence, and true friendship survives all separations of death, to reunite in heaven those whom she unites on earth.

You have read those lines of St. Francis de Sales describing true friendship as the prelude and foretaste of heaven. "If your reciprocal communication," said he, "is made up of charity, of devotion, of Christian perfection, O God! how precious will your friendship be! It will be excellent, because it came from God; excellent, because it tends to God; excellent, because its bond is God; excellent, because it will last for ever in God. Oh! how pleasant it is to love on earth as they love in heaven, and to learn mutually to cherish one another in this world as we shall do throughout eternity in the next! The delicious balm of devotion distils from heart to heart by continual participation; and so it may be said that God has extended His

blessings and the life of ages upon ages over such friendship. Never did so chaste a tie change but into a union of spirits more perfect and more pure—a living image of the blessed friendships to exist in heaven."

Feel no scruple, then, when death deprives you of a friend, in consoling yourself by repeating: "She forgets me not? she prays for me, she watches over me; we remain united."

Thus did St. Gregory Nazianzen console himself after the death of St. Basil, his perfect friend: "Now," said he, "Basil is in heaven. It is there he offers his former sacrifices for us, and breathes forth fresh prayers for the people; for in departing he has not altogether left us. At times even he comes to warn me by nocturnal visions, and he reproves me when I deviate from my duty."

In this manner St. Augustine likewise consoled himself when death had carried away one of his friends to Abraham's bosom. "It is there," exclaimed he, "that my Nebridius is living—my sweet friend, thy adopted child, O Lord! It is there he lives, there he drinks in all the wisdom for which he thirsts. Still, he is not, I think, so inebriated with it as to forget me. How could he forget me, since thou thyself, Lord, who art the draught of wisdom to my friend, rememberest us?"

A holy bishop, writing to a holy Pope, affords us another instance of the same views. In anticipation of death, whose strokes could not long fail to fall on both, he thus seeks comfort: "Let us, at all times and in all places, remember and pray for one another; let us strive to soften our pains and anguish by our mutual love; and if one of us, through the goodness of God, precede the other to heaven, may our friendship continue in the presence of God, and our prayers unceasingly implore the mercy of our Father in favor of our brothers and sisters."

You may go still further. After having previously consoled yourself to a certain degree by a strong hope that your friend would pray more efficaciously for you if she

were the first to reach heaven, you will rejoice in the thought of rejoining her there, and you will say to her: "In Paradise we shall be together—yes, together in the presence of God; and there how much more dearly shall we love one another!"

But some may be found who will endeavor forcibly to repress all these sentiments of a loving heart, and who will make you this reproach: "What! is it not a manifest and gross imperfection to rouse your courage and to stimulate yourself in your struggle with the world, by the hope of reposing on the bosom of those whom you love?" You may reply, madam, that there have been great saints who were even more sensible than you to this hope, and that they desired to enjoy again, in a blessed eternity, the chaste embraces of their friends.

The Apostle of India acknowledged this to the founder of the Society of Jesus.

"You say," wrote St. Francis Xavier to St. Ignatius—"you say, in the excess of your friendship for me, that you would most ardently wish to see me once more before you die. Oh! God alone, who looks into the heart, knows how vivid and how deep an impression this dear proof of your affection has made on my soul. Each time that I recall it—and that happens often—my eyes involuntarily fill with tears; and if the delightful idea that I could embrace you once more presents itself to my mind (for, however difficult it appear at first sight, there is nothing that holy obedience cannot accomplish), I find myself for an instant surprised by a torrent of tears that no power can arrest.

"I pray God that if we are not to see each other again whilst living, we may together enjoy in a happy eternity the repose never to be found in this life."

"It is all over; we never shall meet again on earth otherwise than by letters; but in heaven—ah! we shall meet face to face. And then with what transport shall we not embrace one another!"

Who, indeed, can tell the transports which two virtuous friends will experience for each other eternally in heaven, after having here below loved each other unto perfection, and verified the saying of holy Scripture: "A faithful friend is the medicine of life and immortality; and they that fear the Lord shall find such a friend"? (Eccl. vi. 16).

LETTER SIXTH.

MAN KNOWS THE ANGELS; OR, THE UNION OF MEN AND ANGELS IN HEAVEN.

Madam: God Almighty, not content to grant us essential beatitude—the vision of Increated Good—that is, of Himself—denies us not, besides, that part of accidental beatitude consisting of the knowledge and love of our friends and relations. Far from it, He will even multiply joys and pleasures for the eyes, the tongue, the taste, the smell, and the touch—in a word, for all the senses of the body. He will "renew the heavens and the earth" (Apoc. lxv. 19; xxi. 1), that through our senses, as well as through our intellects, we may derive enjoyment from beings devoid of reason.

"If bodies," says St. Thomas, "have merited nothing of themselves, man has done so for them; he has merited that glory should be given them, to increase his own glory. Thus, when any one has acquired a new dignity, it is just that he should assume more sumptuous attire, to correspond with his fresh glories."

St. John Chrysostom employs two other comparisons. "When a royal prince," says he, "takes possession of the paternal throne, does not the nurse who reared him receive many additional gifts and favors? Well! material creatures are our nurses. When a son is to appear in public invested with some high office, does not the father, in order to do him honor, take care to bestow richer garments upon his servants? So will our heavenly Father, when he presents us in the world on high with the white toga of manhood, with the rightful insignia of our rank, increase our glory by robing with incor-

ruptibility those material works of His creation which are our servants."

If so, then, how much more must the saints, both before and after the blessed resurrection, enjoy those pure spirits who range above other creatures, and with whom, through our souls, we have a real affinity! Already we love and honor them; in heaven we shall also see them, and we shall each of us know our own benign guardian. There we shall be placed amongst the angelic choirs, in a rank determined by the degree of our merits or by the nature of our virtues.

St. Thomas thinks that some blessed souls are already enthroned in the highest ranks of celestial spirits, and that in a position so elevated they have a clearer view of God than the inferior angels.

Not an angelic choir will be excepted; in all, sooner or later, the thrones left vacant by the fallen spirits will be seen filled by men. St. Bonaventure shares this opinion, and thinks that the blessed whose merit does not attain the level of the least exalted of the angels, form a tenth order or choir.

In this order, no doubt, are to be found infants who, forestalled by death, could add no personal merit to the grace of their baptism—blessed angels, whom their mothers invoke as consolation for no longer beholding them, and who have become the zealous patrons of their families. Of how great an evil, then, are those women guilty who shrink from the pains of childbirth or shun the troubles of education; and of what joys do they deprive themselves for ever by avoiding to people heaven with little angels, who, at their entrance into glory, would advance to greet them, and who would encircle them eternally with homage! As for you, madam, happier far, you will see your numerous children, your relations, and all whom you most loved on earth, swell the ranks of the angels, and form, perhaps, the greatest ornament of their respective choirs. May this hope be your solace, as it has already proved that of a mother afflicted, like you, by the death of more than one child!

St. Frances of Rome, in a vision, saw several blessed souls ascending to take their places in eternal glory according to the rank assigned them by God. All the angelic choirs through which these souls passed, as they rose higher and higher, lavished on them the sincerest proofs of love and the most lively signs of joy. It is ever thus. But the choir wherein the newly arrived soul occupies a throne surpasses all the others in thrilling congratulations and in transports of bliss. In it is intoned a canticle of praise and thanksgiving in honor of the God of all goodness, and in it this sweet rejoicing continues long after it has ceased to resound in the other choirs.

Since that vision, every time the saint strove to express the joy of the angels on the arrival of the souls of the blessed in heaven, and the admirable union of human and angelic creatures, her face became crimson and she seemed to melt like wax before the fire.

With what joy must have been welcomed, and to what heights must have ascended, your daughter who bore the name of the Queen of Angels, and who was herself an angel of piety, of devotedness and of purity! She daily sought your blessing, and at sight of her portrait your hand still, as if by instinct, moves to bless her. Now, however, it is she who, each day, sends down from on high the blessings she implores for you from God—all those most desired by the saints, blessings of suffering and crosses, and, with them, blessings of patience and love. Rejoice, therefore, in her happiness; it must constitute yours, for Mary is more in her place in heaven than on earth, amidst angels than men.

The suavity of this holy union, contracted in the fatherland of spirits, between angels and men, has been described to us by the genius of some of our great Catholic authors.

St. Thomas of Aquino gives us to understand that the angels place part of their felicity in reigning, each, with the blessed one who was confided to his care; in sitting on the same throne; in wearing, so to say, the same crown; and in

forming with him but one heart and one soul; since every man is to have in heaven an angel to reign with him or in hell a demon to torture him.

St. Bonaventure tells us that the beatitude of man, his former charge, increases the joy of the angel, both as to extension, since he has the felicity of another to share, and even as to intensity. This intensity is not, it is true, to be understood as applying to the essential, but merely to the accidental reward. It may be explained by the increased good of the angels themselves, by the good of the sanctified creatures whom they tenderly love, and especially, in each case, by the good of that soul which was, in particular, the most intimately connected with an angel, because the latter was the minister of its salvation and performed for its sake a thousand beneficent actions. All this is to the angels a source of rejoicing and of congratulation.

Between the guardian angel and the blessed object of his care will occur mysteries of love, neither to be seen nor understood by us until the mists of earth shall have been dispersed by the radiance of heaven. The spirit lays before the man the affecting view of all his efforts to keep him in the right path and to lead him to perfection, and unfolds to him the whole plan of Divine Providence in the work of his salvation. The saint replies to the heavenly spirit by testifying his gratitude a thousand times over, by recalling the confidence with which he used to recommend himself to his good angel, by assuring him that the happy past is ever fresh in his memory, and that these recollections are as perfumes to his soul, still inhaled with delight, even amidst the joys of Paradise. Often in this endearing converse the angel and the man draw closer together, impelled by that Divine breath called the charity of patriotism; and from one heart into the other fall the effusions of a penetrating joy, like unto the dew of heaven.

Thus, in the gardens of earth, we sometimes see two neighboring flowers bowed down till they meet by the action of a

favoring breeze, as if to give the kiss of peace and to mingle their treasures together.

The great poet who has so admirably described Paradise is, therefore, again in the right. On one hand, he shows that men know each other in heaven, even when they have not been acquainted on earth. St. Thomas recognized his master, Albert the Great; but he also knew Denis the Areopagite, Bede, and Isidore. St. Bennet recognized his disciples; and the prince of the apostles recognized St. James; but the great Abbot of Clairvaux also knew the father of all mankind, and the father of the Church, Simon Peter, St. Augustine, and a crowd of others, whom he could not have known here below. On the other hand, angels and men know each other. St. Bernard knows the Archangel Gabriel, and all the pure spirits know the incomparable Virgin who is the Mother of God.

At times this powerful genius imagines heaven to be like a garden, through which flows a stream of light of dazzling splendor, between two banks tinted with the colors of a wondrous spring. From this stream of light issue bright sparks, flying from all parts to rest on the flowers, like rubies set in gold. Then, as if inebriated with perfumes, they fly back to their brilliant source, and as one enters another departs. These sparks are angels—these flowers are saints.

At other times he represents Paradise as a white rose, exhaling a perfume of praise to the sun, which engenders perpetual spring. For, since the blessed from earth are ranged in circles on more than a thousand steps, and that the circles widen as the steps rise higher, this arrangement reminds him of the form of the rose, whose petals increase in size as they recede from the centre in which the yellow stamens bloom. "This is why," said he, "the heavenly host, espoused by Christ in His blood, showed itself to me in the form of a white rose." But the angels who, whilst flying, ceased not to see and to sing the glory of their Creator, had golden wings and faces beaming with light; the rest of their

bodies was whiter than snow. On whatever step they might happen to alight, there they brought the glow of love, and shed the fragrance of peace. First, they flew down into the great flower adorned with so many leaves; then they rose up to the perpetual abode of their love, that is, towards the heart of God, like a swarm of bees, settling sometimes on the flowers, and at others returning to the place whence the savor of their work proceeds.

Madam, you may fearlessly have recourse to these poetic images to represent to yourself the blessed company of angels and of men. When heaven is in question, or the happiness of the elect, no images borrowed from earth can exaggerate, but they rather fall far short of the reality. For, here below, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. ii. 9).

Besides, did not our Lord Himself borrow an image from earth to give us an idea of heaven when he compared it to a banquet? (Luke xxix. 29).

As the seven sons of Job invited one another in turn, each on his day, to a splendid feast (Job i. 4), so in Paradise the children of God bid each other to the partaking of their felicities. Great must have been the reciprocal love of Job's sons when they placed all their riches in common; but how much is fraternal love exceeded by the mutual love of the angels and saints! How much more abundant and inexhaustible are the riches of God than those of Job! How far does the number of the children of God in heaven surpass that of the most prolific parents on earth! What, then, is the magnificence of the banquet to which each of the choirs of angels is summoned by each of the choirs of saints, who have gone up from the valley of exile to the eternal hills of the fatherland!

Fair heaven, delicious banquet, where the seraphim and the cherubim send round as a precious liquor and a life-giving manna the manifestation of Divine secrets, the clearness of their contemplations, the ardor and the activity of their

charity—where the thrones, the dominations, the principalities, the powers, the virtues, the archangels, the angels and men, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, pontiffs, confessors, and virgins, pour out their beings, in turn, into one another's hearts, as into an enchanted cup, ever overflowing, and yet ever full of that which it has given—the wine of God, the wine of knowledge and of purity, the wine of gratitude and of joy!

Thus, in the heights of heaven, under the eyes of the Father of the family, all His children—those who are pure spirits and those who are covered with a veil of flesh—know, esteem, love one another, and converse together in a perfect communication, a constant interchange of glory, of felicity, of light and of love. All those stars, shining in the firmament of eternity without any fear of eclipse, cross their rays and their fires, reciprocally inundate each other with their brightness, and seem to float in an ocean of ineffable splendor; all those animated instruments which never cease to resound under the impulse of Divine love, form a sea of harmony, where billow mingles with billow, the strongest of them giving of its abundance to the weakest, in order that their movements, like regulated and irresistible waves, may encroach upon, undermine, and carry away all things towards God.

LETTER SEVENTH.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS.

Madam: All that I have written, so far, ought not to make you forget that the essence of beatitude is the clear vision or the intuition of God Himself. The knowledge of creatures added to the knowledge of the Creator appears to the blessed less than a drop of water to the ocean. They say with the son of Amos: "All nations, all families of men, angels, and stars cannot enter into comparison with God alone; they are before Him as if they had no being at all, and are counted to Him as nothing and vanity" (Isa. xl. 15, 17). And with the son of Monica they say: Lord, God of all truth, how unhappy is the man who knows all creatures and who knows not thee! How fortunate is he who knows thee, even if he is learned in naught else! He who unites these two sciences, that of the Creator and that of the creature, finds not his happiness increased by the knowledge of created beings; but thou alone, O my God! renderest him happy."

It is not for this less true, as I think I have sufficiently proved to you that a part of the accidental beatitude reserved by the Lord for all His elect consists in the knowledge of creatures. It is a fine subject for meditation, and I venture to propose it to you after the Rev. Father Coton.

The inhabitants of heaven know all the mysteries of the past, and feel joy at sights that too often sadden us. "What shall I say," wrote a pious and learned cardinal, treating of the eternal felicity of the saints,—"what shall I say of the course of times and of ages, from the commencement to the end? What exquisite enjoyment will not the elect receive in contemplating so many vicissitudes and changes amongst

the things governed with wisdom, and guided to their ends by an inimitable Providence! Have we not here that stream of the river which so marvelously maketh the city of God joyful? (Ps. xlv. 5). What, in fact, is it but the order and succession of ages flowing rapidly, and never interrupting their course, if it be not the impetuosity of a stream unremittingly rushing towards the ocean, into which it plunges and disappears? While the stream of time flows on many men doubt God's providence. Amongst His own servants some are troubled or seriously tempted, and murmur at His government. For this rapidity of the stream often causes great damage to the good and benefit to the wicked, carrying away the soil from the lands of the just man to deposit it on the fields of the impious. But when time shall have run its course, and the stream shall have entered into the sea, the saints will plainly read in the books of Divine Providence the reasons for all the revolutions of nature and of history. Then will the impetuosity of this stream, represented by memory, make joyful the city of God beyond aught that mortal tongue can tell."

But in the infinite mirror of the Divine essence, wherein all things are seen, the souls of the blessed principally discern that which concerns those who are attached to them by the closest ties.

This is, I think, superabundantly proved by all the testimonies I have produced instead of speaking from myself. I have done so that your spirit may be the more surely soothed by thus living for a time in the company, or, better still, in the intimacy, of the saints and of the doctors, whose hearts were ever most tender and most compassionate. If, then, any one should presume again to tell you that in heaven we do not recognize one another, show him that "cloud of witnesses" hovering over your head, of whom the Apostle speaks (Heb. xii. 1). They are all the learned and virtuous authors whom I have cited to you, and many more whom I might have cited. They form a cloud, as it were, of fire, whose effulgence gives evidence that the sun of truth has arisen above the earth, and

gilds it with his rays. They form a cloud, the softness and depth of which give sweet repose to our eyes, and to our hearts a hope of the fertilizing showers of consolation. Their opponents also form clouds, but dark and lowering ones. They increase the horror of the obscurity in which we live, and with a sombre shadow intercept our view of the eternal light to which we look forward. They shut out from our knowledge and love those brilliant stars called the blessed in heaven, and force our looks to settle sadly on the tomb when we most need to raise them to heaven, in order to find a little light and joy.

To deny that we know our own in heaven is then to do much harm, to increase sorrow, and to turn it into faintness of spirit and despair.

But to diffuse the important truth now established is to soften affliction, to sustain piety, and to animate zeal; these are three practical conclusions remaining for me to develop.

Few men have had a soul so sensible to the loss of friends as the amiable Archbishop of Cambrai. Is it not he who has written: "We could be tempted to wish that all good friends might wait to die on the same day. Those who have no affection would bury the whole human race with dry eyes and light hearts; such men are unworthy to live. Our sensibility to friendship costs us much, but those who possess it would be ashamed to be without it—they would rather suffer than be devoid of feeling"?

See how, nevertheless, he could set aside his own affliction to console those more afflicted than he. At the death of his friend, the Duke of Beauvilliers, he wrote to the Duchess: "No; only the senses and the imagination have lost their object. He whom we can no longer see is with us more than ever. We find him unceasingly in our common centre. He sees us there, he there obtains for us real helps, and knows our infirmities better than we do, though now delivered from his own; he also prays for the remedies requisite for our cure. As to me, who had been deprived of seeing him during so many years, I now speak to him, I open my heart to him, I

seem to find him in the presence of God; and although I bitterly wept for him, I cannot think that I have lost him. Oh! what reality there is in this intimate association."

Fénelon, again, wrote to the widow of the Duke of Chevreuse: "Let us unite in heart with him whom we regret; he has not been removed far away from us, though he has become invisible. He sees us, he loves us, he is affected by our wants. Having himself arrived safely in port, he prays for us who are still in danger of shipwreck. He says to us in a whisper: 'Hasten to join us.' Pure spirits see, hear, and still love their true friends in their common centre. Their friendship is immortal, like its source. Unbelievers love themselves only; they must be in despair when they lose their friends, as they think it is for ever; but *divine friendship* changes visible company into a company of pure faith; she weeps, but whilst weeping finds an alleviation to her sorrow in the hope of rejoining her friends in the land of the truth in the bosom of love."

What can be better calculated to maintain piety than these affectionate and confidential relations, which may be established between us and our dear deceased from the moment we are permitted to hope that, having died in the grace of God, they no more forget us than we forget them? No doubt it is the enjoyment of the presence of the Lord and our communion with Him, even in this mortal life, which does most to nourish our piety. Still, to commune and treat with the saints of heaven long and often, whenever we please, is not this a powerful means at the same time of sanctification and of consolation? By this practice do we not, in some degree, participate in the privilege of the angels, who have continual intercourse and the sweetest familiarity with the saints? The remembrance of a virtuous and faithful friend whom we possess in this world is often enough to drive far from us, besides care and sadness, temptation, despair, and all evil thoughts. How much more efficacious and salutary must, then, be for our souls the thought, the frequentation, sometimes even the

conversation of those friends and relations who behold the Lord face to face and who are in the enjoyment of His glory! A pious author, Father de Barry, advises us to invoke those who, though the Church has not held them up publicly to our veneration, led a holy life upon earth, or whose end at least was edifying—particularly if their love for us was pleasing to God. "Make a list of them," said he, "and once a year, or rather once a week, read it over, and invoke those inscribed on it. This habit can only be productive of a more ardent desire to meet again in heaven, the happy number of those who were united to you on earth. How great will be your bliss when you obtain from God, through their intercession, gifts that you have long solicited in vain! For I do not doubt that by their intervention our prayers are sometimes answered. If they loved us living, and could not find in their hearts to refuse our requests, how will it not be with them now, since their charity has become far more ardent and they are in so much greater favor with God?"

St. Francis often invoked those who had died in the Society of Jesus. He had recourse to all those whom he had known and with whom he had lived; he recommended to them all his undertakings, considered them as his patrons at the celestial court, and declared that he frequently found their prayers of great service.

St. Louis Bertrand, of the Order of St. Dominic, had composed entire litanies with the names of his dearest friends whom he thought already in the possession of eternal happiness, and he often invoked them in his need.

A book published this very year (1862) furnishes another and a similar example. In the *Life of M. Emery, Ninth Superior of the Seminary of St. Sulpice*, we read, on the subject of the former priests of this society who had given the greatest edification by their virtues: "In several of his retreats he formed the resolution of drawing up, from the burial charts of the seminary, a memorandum to remind him of the days of the decease of such of those holy priests as

inspired him with the greatest devotion, in order that he might invoke them on those days with fervor, and return thanks to God for the eminent sanctity to which He had raised them."

There is only one objection that you can make to so pious a practice: "Perhaps my friends and relations are not in heaven—perhaps they are in purgatory." It is true that the Church has not proclaimed where they are. But prayer never goes astray, and among the great number whom you would thus invoke, some must certainly have reached the haven of felicity. Several grave theologians are of opinion that the souls in purgatory can themselves pray for us, as they are not in a worse condition than the living who are sinners and enemies of God. They are even confirmed in the grace and friendship of the Lord; they possess the perfection of charity; they remember all that they owe us; and they can know of our prayers through their guardian angels. Why should they not, then, pray to God for us, since they come sometimes to pray to us for themselves, as we see in the life of St. Bridget that the soul of her husband appeared to her, and prayed to her to have masses said, and alms distributed to the poor?

St. Catherine of Bologna frequently invoked the souls in purgatory, and said that God had granted her, through their intercession, the greatest and the most numerous favors. "Often even," added she, "that which for a long time I could not obtain through the prayers of the saints in heaven, I have obtained as soon as I had recourse to those suffering souls."

Finally, let the hope of meeting them in heaven, of recognizing them and of being recognized by them, reanimate your zeal, and stimulate you to work with greater ardor for the relief of these poor souls, as well as for the conversion of sinners.

The souls in purgatory are so thankful for all that is done for them, that persons who have relieved them receive proofs of their gratitude before they can join them in heaven. It was even given to St. Gertrude, who had so great a zeal for their deliverance during her life, to see and to converse with those whom she had succored.

One day after communion Gertrude offered the adorable Host for the repose of the souls of all the deceased relations of the members of the community. She immediately saw a great number of souls like sparks or stars emerge from darkness. "Lord," exclaimed she, "are there none in this multitude but the souls of our relations?" "I am, myself," replied the Lord, "your nearest relation; I am your brother, your father, and your spouse. All those who are especially mine thus become your relations and connections, and it is my will that they have a share in the fruits of the prayers offered up by you for your relations."

Continue then, madam, to pray for your husband, your children, and all the members of your family whom God has withdrawn from this earth. If their souls are, as I hope, already in the place of refreshment, light, and peace, your prayers will relieve others of the household of Jesus Christ, and snatch them from the expiatory flames to introduce them into eternal repose. But limit not your zeal to the dead: let it be catholic or universal, like the Church. Among the living, how many sinners, how many infidels, are there, whose return to God you may hasten by your cares, by your prayers, by your alms, and by all your merits! Have compassion on their misery, for they are blind men, led onward to the ruin of all that is love by the very disorder of their delusive affections. To none so much as to the souls of the lost can St. Paul's description of the heathens be applied, "They are without affection" (Rom. i. 31). If it be true that the original elements of natural affection remain in hell, it is, alas! so far only as they are evil and disunited from Jesus Christ. Moreover, they no longer produce there any but fruits of bitterness —a hatred so much the greater as there seemed the greater love. But in bringing the lost sheep back to the Shepherd, and the prodigal child to his Father, you prepare for yourself in heaven the fulfillment of these words of the prophet: "Lift up thy eyes round about, and see all these are gathered together, they are come to thee: I live, saith the Lord, thou

shalt be clothed with all these as with an ornament, and as a bride thou shalt put them about thee. The children of thy barrenness shall still say in thy ears: The place is too strait for me, make me room to dwell in" (Isaias xlix. 18, 20).

To those whom you will have converted, you may say like the Apostle: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you, my most desired, my joy and my crown" (Gal. iv. 19; Philip. iv. 1). In view of this crown of joy awaiting you in Paradise, when the time shall come to leave this sad place of exile, no longer truly to you but a valley of tears, you will have the comfort of saying to yourself: "I am going to be reunited to those whom I have sent before me to our own country; I am going to see them again, and to recognize them, to enjoy the proofs of their gratitude and of their love."

You may even say to those whom you are leaving on earth, as the Master said to His disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am you may also be" (John xiv. 2, 3). "A little while, and now you shall not see me, because I go to the Father. I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you" (John xvi. 16, 22).

But the Lord will deign to leave you, madam, yet a long time amongst us, for the happiness of your children and of your grandchildren, as well as for the edification of all the faithful.

Such, at least, is the wish and the prayer, madam, of your most humble and devoted servant.

F. BLOT, S. J.

Cardinal John Henry Newman's

Famous Reply

..to..

Right Honorable W. E. Gladstone's attack on the Pope, in his pamphlet entitled

"Vaticanism."

"From the day on which I became a Catholic to this day, now close upon thirty years, I have never had a moment's misgiving."—*Cardinal John Henry Newman.*

To His Grace the Duke of Norfolk, Hereditary Earl Marshal of England, Etc., Etc.

My dear Duke of Norfolk:

When I yielded to the earnest wish which you, together with many others, urged upon me, that I should reply to Mr. Gladstone's recent expostulation, a friend suggested that I ought to ask your Grace's permission to address my remarks to you. Not that for a moment he or I thought of implicating you, in any sense or measure, in a responsibility which is solely and entirely my own; but on a very serious occasion, when such heavy charges had been made against the Catholics of England by so powerful and so earnest an adversary, it seemed my duty, in meeting his challenge, to gain the support, if I could, of a name which is the special representative and the fitting sample of a laity as zealous for the Catholic Religion as it is patriotic.

You consented with something of the reluctance which I had felt myself when called upon to write; for it was hard to

be summoned at any age, early or late, from a peaceful course of life and the duties of one's station, to a scene of war. Still, you consented; and for myself, it is the compensation for a very unpleasant task, that I, who belong to a generation that is fast flitting away, am thus enabled, in what is likely to be my last publication, to associate myself with one, on many accounts so dear to me, so full of young promise—whose career is before him.

I deeply grieve that Mr. Gladstone has felt it his duty to speak with such extraordinary severity of our Religion and of ourselves. I consider he has committed himself to a representation of ecclesiastical documents which will not hold, and to a view of our position in the country which we have neither deserved nor can be patient under. None but the *Sehola Theologorum* is competent to determine the force of Papal and Synodal utterances, and the exact interpretation of them is a work of time. But so much may be safely said of the decrees which have lately been promulgated, and of the faithful who have received them, that Mr. Gladstone's account, both of them and of us, is neither trustworthy nor charitable.

Yet not a little may be said in explanation of a step which so many of his admirers and well-wishers deplore. I own to a deep feeling, that Catholics may in good measure thank themselves, and no one else, for having alienated from them so religious a mind. There are those among us, as it must be confessed, who for years past have conducted themselves as if no responsibility attached to wild words and overbearing deeds; who have stated truths in the most paradoxical form, and stretched principles till they were close upon snapping; and who at length, having done their best to set the house on fire, leave to others the task of putting out the flame. The English people are sufficiently sensitive of the claims of the Pope, without having them, as if in defiance, flourished in their faces. Those claims most certainly I am not going to deny; I have never denied them. I have no intention, now that I have to write upon them, to conceal any

part of them. And I uphold them as heartily as I recognize my duty of loyalty to the constitution, the laws, and the government of England. I see no inconsistency in my being at once a good Catholic and a good Englishman. Yet it is one thing to be able to satisfy myself as to my consistency, quite another to satisfy others; and, undisturbed as I am in my own conscience, I have great difficulties in the task before me. I have one difficulty to overcome in the present excitement of the public mind against our Religion, caused partly by the chronic extravagances of knots of Catholics here and there, partly by the vehement rhetoric which is the occasion and subject of this Letter. A worse difficulty lies in getting people, as they are commonly found, to put off the modes of speech and language which are usual with them, and to enter into scientific distinctions and traditionary rules of interpretation, which as being new to them, appear evasive and unnatural. And a third difficulty, as I may call it, is this—that in so very wide a subject, opening as great a variety of questions, and of opinions upon them, while it will be simply necessary to take the objections made against us and our faith, one by one, readers may think me trifling with their patience, because they do not find those points first dealt with on which they lay most stress themselves.

But I have said enough by way of preface, and without more delay turn to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet.

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTORY.

The main question which Mr. Gladstone has started I consider to be this: Can Catholics be trustworthy subjects of the State? Has not a foreign Power a hold over their consciences such, that it may at any time be used to the serious perplexity and injury of the civil government under which they live? Not that Mr. Gladstone confines himself to these questions, for he goes out of his way, I am sorry to say, to taunt us with our loss of mental and moral freedom, a vituperation which is not necessary for his purpose at all. He informs us too that we have "repudiated ancient history," and are rejecting modern "thought," and that our Church has been "refurbishing her rusty tools," and has been lately aggravating, and is likely still more to aggravate, our state of bondage. I think it unworthy of Mr. Gladstone's high character thus to have inveighed against us; what intellectual manliness is left to us according to him? Yet his circle of acquaintance is too wide, and his knowledge of his countrymen on the other hand too accurate, for him not to know that he is bringing a great amount of odium and bad feeling upon excellent men, whose only offence is their religion. The more intense is the prejudice with which we are regarded by whole classes of men, the less is there of generosity in his pouring upon us superfluous reproaches. The graver the charge which is the direct occasion of his writing against us, the more careful should he be not to prejudice judge and jury to our disadvantage. No rhetoric is needed in England against an unfortunate Catholic at any time; but so little is Mr. Gladstone conscious of his treatment of us, that in one place of his pamphlet, strange as it may seem, he makes it his boast that he has been careful to "do nothing towards importing passion into what is matter

of pure argument" (pp. 15, 16). I venture to think he will one day be sorry for what he has said.

However, we must take things as we find them; and what I propose to do is this—to put aside, unless it comes directly in my way, his accusation against us of repudiating ancient history, rejecting modern thought and renouncing our mental freedom, and to confine myself for the most part to what he principally insists upon, that Catholics, if they act consistently with their principles, cannot be loyal subjects; I shall not, however, omit notice of his attack upon our moral uprightness.

The occasion and the grounds of Mr. Gladstone's impeachment of us, if I understand him, are as follows:—He was alarmed, as a statesman, ten years ago by the Pope's Encyclical of December 8, and by the Syllabus of Erroneous Propositions which, by the Pope's authority, accompanied its transmission to the bishops. Then came the Definitions of the Vatican Council in 1870, upon the universal jurisdiction and doctrinal infallibility of the Pope. And lastly, as the event which turned alarm into indignation, and into the duty of public remonstrance, "the Roman Catholic Prelacy of Ireland thought fit to procure the rejection of" the Irish University Bill of February, 1873, "by the direct influence which they exercised over a certain number of Irish members of Parliament," etc. (p. 60). This step on the part of the bishops showed, if I understand him, the new and mischievous force which had been acquired at Rome by the late acts there, or at least left him at liberty, by causing his loss of power, to denounce it. "From that time forward the situation was changed," and an opening was made for a "broad political discussion" on the subject of the Catholic Religion and its professors, and a "debt to the country had to be disposed of." That debt, if I am right, will be paid, if he can ascertain, on behalf of the country, that there is nothing in the Catholic Religion to hinder its professors from being as loyal as other subjects of the State, and that the See of Rome cannot interfere

with their civil duties so as to give the civil power trouble or alarm. The main ground on which he relies for the necessity of some such inquiry is, first, the text of the authoritative documents of 1864 and 1870; next, and still more, the *animus* which they breathe, and the sustained aggressive spirit which they disclose; and thirdly, the daring deed of aggression in 1873, when the Pope, acting (as it is alleged) upon the Irish members of Parliament, succeeded in ousting from their seats a ministry who, besides past benefits, were at that very time doing for Irish Catholics, and therefore ousted for doing, a special service.

Now, it would be preposterous and officious in me to put myself forward as champion for the Venerable Prelacy of Ireland, or to take upon myself the part of advocate and representative of the Holy See. "Non tali auxilio"; in neither character could I come forward without great presumption; not the least, for this reason, because I cannot know the exact points which are really the *gist* of the affront, which Mr. Gladstone conceives he has sustained, whether from the one quarter or from the other; yet in a question so nearly interesting myself as that February bill, which he brought into the House, in great sincerity and kindness, for the benefit of the Catholic University in Ireland, I may be allowed to say thus much—that I, who now have no official relation to the Irish Bishops, and am not in any sense in the counsels of Rome, felt at once, when I first saw the outline of that bill, the greatest astonishment on reading one of its provisions, and a dread which painfully affected me, lest Mr. Gladstone perhaps was acting on an understanding with the Catholic Prelacy. I did not see how in honor they could accept it. It was possible, did the question come over again, to decide in favor of the Queen's Colleges, and to leave the project of a Catholic University alone. The Holy See might so have decided in 1847. But at or about that date three rescripts had come from Rome in favor of a distinctively Catholic Institution; a National Council had decided in its favor; large offers

of the Government had been rejected; great commotions had been caused in the political world; munificent contributions had been made; all on the sole principle that Catholic teaching was to be upheld in the country inviolate. If, then, for the sake of a money grant, or other secular advantage, this ground of principle was deserted, and Catholic youths after all were allowed to attend the lectures of men of no religion, or of the Protestant, the contest of thirty years would have been stultified, and the Pope and the Bishops would seem to have been playing a game, while putting forward the plea of conscience and religious duty. I hoped that the clause in the bill, which gave me such uneasiness, could have been omitted from it; but, anyhow, it was an extreme relief to me when the papers announced that the Bishops had expressed their formal dissatisfaction with it.

They determined to decline a gift laden with such a condition, and who can blame them for so doing? who can be surprised that they should now do what they did in 1847? what new move in politics was it, if they so determined? what was there in it of a factious character? Is the Catholic Irish interest the only one which is not to be represented in the House of Commons? Why is not that interest as much a matter of right as any other? I fear to expose my own ignorance of Parliamentary rules and proceedings, but I had supposed that the railway interest, and what is called the publican interest, were very powerful there: in Scotland, too, I believe, a government has a formidable party to deal with; and, to revert to Ireland, there are the Home-rulers, who have objects in view, quite distinct from, or contrary to, those of the Catholic hierarchy. As to the Pope, looking at the surface of things, there is nothing to suggest that he interfered, there was no necessity of interference on so plain a point; and, when an act can be sufficiently accounted for without introducing an hypothetical cause, it is bad logic to introduce it. Speaking according to my lights, I altogether disbelieve the interposition of Rome in the matter. In the proceedings

which they adopted, the Bishops were only using civil rights, common to all, which others also used and in their own way. Why might it not be their duty to promote the interests of their religion by means of their political opportunities? Is there no Exeter Hall interest? I thought it was a received theory of our Reformed Constitution that members of Parliament were representatives, and in some sort delegates of their constituents, and that the strength of each interest was shown, and the course of the nation determined, by the divisions in the House of Commons. I recollect the *Times* intimating its regret, after one general election, that there was no English Catholic in the new House, on the ground that every class and party should be represented there. Surely the Catholic Religion has not a small party in Ireland; why then should it not have a corresponding number of exponents and defenders at Westminster? So clear does this seem to me, that I think there must be some defect in my knowledge of facts to explain Mr. Gladstone's surprise and displeasure at the conduct of the Irish Prelacy in 1873; yet I suspect none; and, if there be none, then his unreasonableness in this instance of Ireland makes it not unlikely that he is unreasonable also in his judgment of the Encyclical, Syllabus, and Vatican Decrees.

However, the Bishops, I believe, not only opposed Mr. Gladstone's bill, but, instead of it, they asked for some money grant toward the expenses of their University. If so, their obvious argument was this—that Catholics formed the great majority of the population of Ireland, and it was not fair that the Protestant minority should have all that was bestowed in endowment or otherwise upon education. To this the reply, I suppose, would be, that it was not Protestantism, but liberal education that had the money, and that, if the Bishops chose to give up their own principles and act as Liberals, they might have the benefit of it too. I am not concerned here with these arguments, but I wish to notice the position which the Bishops would occupy in urging such a request: I must not say that

they were Irishmen first and Catholics afterwards, but I do say that in such a demand they spoke not simply as Catholic Bishops, but as the Bishops of a Catholic nation. They did not speak from any promptings of the Encyclical, Syllabus, or Vatican Decrees. They claimed as Irishmen a share in the endowments of the country; and has not Ireland surely a right to speak in such a matter, and might not her Bishops fairly represent her? It seems to me a great mistake to think that everything that is done by the Irish Bishops and clergy is done on an ecclesiastical motive; why not on a national? but if so, such acts have nothing to do with Rome. I know well what simple, firm faith the great body of the Irish people have, and how they put the Catholic Religion before anything else in the world. It is their comfort, their joy, their treasure, their boast, their compensation for a hundred worldly disadvantages; but who can deny that in politics their conduct at times—nay more than at times—has had a flavor rather of their nation than of their Church? Only in the last general election this was said, when they were so earnest for Home Rule. Why, then, must Mr. Gladstone come down upon the Catholic Religion, because the Irish love dearly the Green Island and its interests? Ireland is not the only country in which politics, or patriotism, or party, has been so closely associated with religion in the nation or a class, that it is difficult to say which of the various motive principles was uppermost. "The Puritan," says Macaulay, "prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker, but he set his foot on the neck of his king"; I am not accusing such a man of hypocrisy on account of this; having great wrongs, as he considered, both in religious and temporal matters, and the authors of these distinct wrongs being the same persons, he did not nicely discriminate between the acts which he did as a patriot and the acts which he did as a Puritan. And so as regards Irishmen, they do not, cannot, distinguish between their love of Ireland and their love of religion; their patriotism is religious, and their religion is strongly tinctured with

patriotism; and it is hard to recognize the abstract and Ideal Ultramontane, pure and simple, in the concrete exhibition of him in flesh and blood as found in the polling-booth or in his chapel. I do not see how the Pope can be made answerable for him in any of his political acts during the last fifty years.

This leads me to a subject of which Mr. Gladstone makes a good deal in his pamphlet. I will say of a great man, whom he quotes, and for whose memory I have a great respect, I mean Bishop Doyle, that there was just a little tinge of patriotism in the way in which, on one occasion, he speaks of the Pope. I dare say any of us would have done the same, in the heat of a great struggle for national liberty, for he said nothing but what was true and honest; I only mean that the energetic language which he used was not exactly such as would have suited the atmosphere of Rome. He says to Lord Liverpool: "We are taunted with the proceedings of Popes. What, my Lord, have we Catholics to do with the proceedings of Popes, or why should we be made accountable for them?" (p. 27). Now, with some proceedings of Popes, we Catholics have very much to do indeed; but, if the context of his words is consulted, I make no doubt it would be found that he was referring to certain proceedings of certain Popes, when he said that Catholics had no part of their responsibility. Assuredly there are certain acts of Popes in which no one would like to have part. Then, again, his words require some pious interpretation when he says that "the allegiance due to the king and the allegiance due to the Pope are as distinct and as divided in their nature as any two things can possibly be" (p. 30). Yes, in their nature, in the abstract, but not in the particular case; for a heathen State might bid me throw incense upon the altar of Jupiter, and the Pope would bid me not to do so. I venture to make the same remark on the Address of the Irish Bishops to their clergy and laity in 1826 (quoted at p. 31), and on the Declaration of the Vicars-Apostolic in England, *ibid.*

But I must not be supposed for an instant to mean, in what I have said, that the venerable men, to whom I have referred, were aware of any ambiguity either in such statements as the above, or in others which were denials of the Pope's infallibility. Indeed, one of them at an earlier date, 1793, Dr. Troy, Archbishop of Dublin, had introduced into one of his pastorals the subject which Mr. Gladstone considers they so summarily disposed of. The Archbishop says: "Many Catholics contend that the Pope, when teaching the universal Church, as their supreme visible head and pastor, as successor to St. Peter, and heir to the promises of special assistance made to him by Jesus Christ, is infallible; and that his decrees and decisions in that capacity are to be respected as rules of faith, when they are dogmatical or confined to doctrinal points of faith and morals. Others deny this, and require the expressed or tacit acquiesence of the Church, assembled or dispersed, to stamp infallibility on his dogmatical decrees. Until the Church shall decide upon this question of the Schools, either opinion may be adopted by individual Catholics, without any breach of Catholic communion or peace. The Catholics of Ireland have lately declared that it is not an article of the Catholic faith; nor are they thereby required to believe or profess that the Pope is infallible, without adopting or abjuring either of the recited opinions which are open to discussion, while the Church continues silent about them." The Archbishop thus addressed his flock, at the time when he was informing them that the Pope had altered the oath which was taken by the Catholic Bishops.

As to the language of the Bishops in 1826, we must recollect that at that time the clergy, both of Ireland and England, were educated in Gallican opinions. They took those opinions for granted, and they thought, if they went so far as to ask themselves the question, that the definition of Papal Infallibility was simply impossible. Even among those at the Vatican Council, who themselves personally believed in it, I believe there were Bishops who, until the actual definition

had been passed, thought that such a definition could not be made. Perhaps they would argue that, though the historical evidence was sufficient for their own personal conviction, it was not sufficiently clear of difficulties to be made the ground of a Catholic dogma. Much more would this be the feeling of the Bishops in 1826. "How," they would ask, "can it ever come to pass that a majority of our order should find it their duty to relinquish their prime prerogative, and to make the Church take the shape of a pure monarchy?" They would think its definition as much out of the question, as the prospect that, in twenty-five years after their time, there would be a hierarchy of thirteen Bishops in England, with a Cardinal for Archbishop.

But, all this while, such modes of thinking were foreign altogether to the minds of the *entourage* of the Holy See. Mr. Gladstone himself says, and the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel must have known it as well as he: "The Popes have kept up, with comparatively little intermission, for well-nigh a thousand years, their claim to dogmatic infallibility" (p. 28). Then, if the Pope's claim to infallibility was so patent a fact, could they ever suppose that he could be brought to admit that it was hopeless to turn that claim into a dogma? In truth, Wellington and Peel were very little interested in that question; as was said in a Petition or Declaration signed among others by Dr. Troy, it was "immaterial, in a political light"; but, even if they thought it material, or if there were other questions they wanted to ask, why go to Bishop Doyle? If they wanted to obtain some real information about the probabilities of the future, why did they not go to headquarters? Why did they potter about the halls of Universities in this matter of Papal exorbitances, or rely upon the pamphlets or examinations of Bishops whom they never asked for their credentials? Why not go at once to Rome?

The reason is plain: it was a most notable instance, with a grave consequence, of what is a fixed tradition with the English people, and a great embarrassment to every administration

in its dealings with Catholics. I recollect, years ago, Dr. Griffiths, Vicar-Apostolic, of the London District, giving me an account of an interview he had with the late Lord Derby, then I suppose Colonial Secretary. I understood him to say that Lord Derby was in perplexity at the time, on some West India matter, in which Catholics were concerned, because he could not find their responsible representative. He wanted Dr. Griffiths to undertake the office, and expressed something of disappointment when the Bishop felt obliged to decline it. A chronic malady has from time to time its paroxysms, and the history on which I am now engaged is a serious instance of it. I think it is impossible that the British Government could have entered into formal negotiations with the Pope, without its transpiring in the course of them, and its becoming perfectly clear that Rome could never be a party to such a pledge as England wanted, and that no pledge from Catholics was of any value to which Rome was not a party.

But no; they persisted in an enterprise which was hopeless in its first principle, for they thought to break the indissoluble tie which bound together the head and the members,—and doubtless Rome felt the insult, though she might think it prudent not to notice it. France was not the keystone of the œcumenical power, though her Church was so great and so famous; nor could the hierarchy of Ireland, in spite of its fidelity to the Catholic faith, give any pledge of the future to the statesmen who required one; there was but one See whose word was worth anything in the matter, "that church" (to use the language of the earliest of our Doctors) "to which the faithful all round about are bound to have recourse." Yet for three hundred years it has been the official rule with England to ignore the existence of the Pope, and to deal with Catholics in England, not as his children, but as sectaries of the Roman Catholic persuasion. Napoleon said to his envoy: "Treat with the Pope as if he were master of one hundred thousand men." So clearly did he, from mere worldly sagacity, comprehend the Pope's place in the then state of European affairs,

as to say that "if the Pope had not existed, it would have been well to have created him for that occasion as the Roman consuls created a dictator in difficult circumstances" (Alison's *Hist.*, ch. 35). But we, in the instance of the greatest, the oldest power in Europe, a church whose grandeur in past history demanded, one would think, some reverence in our treatment of her; the mother of English Christianity, who, whether her subsequent conduct had always been motherly or not, had been a true friend to us in the beginning of our history, her we have not only renounced, but, to use a familiar word, we have absolutely cut. Time has gone on and we have no relentings; to-day, as little as yesterday, do we understand that pride was not made for man, nor the cuddling of resentments for a great people. I am entering into no theological question: I am speaking all along of mere decent secular intercourse between England and Rome. A hundred grievances would have been set right on their first uprising, had there been a frank diplomatic understanding between two great powers; but, on the contrary, even within the last few weeks, the present ministry has destroyed any hope of a better state of things by withdrawing from the Vatican the makeshift channel of intercourse which had of late years been permitted there.

The world of politics has its laws; and such abnormal courses as England has pursued have their *Nemesis*. An event has taken place which, alas! already makes itself felt in issues, unfortunate for English Catholics certainly, but also, as I think, for our country. A great Council has been called; and as England has for so long a time ignored Rome, Rome, I suppose, it must be said, has in turn ignored England. I do not mean of set purpose ignored, but as the natural consequence of our act. Bishops brought from the corners of the earth, in 1870, what could they know of English blue-books and Parliamentary debates in the years 1826 and 1829? It was an extraordinary gathering, and its possibility, its purpose, and its issue were alike marvellous, as depending on a coincidence of strange conditions, which, as might be said

beforehand, never could take place. Such was the long reign of the Pope, in itself a marvel, as being the sole exception to a recognized ecclesiastical tradition. Only a Pontiff so unfortunate, so revered, so largely loved, so popular even with Protestants, with such a prestige of long sovereignty, with such claims on the Bishops around him, both of age and of paternal gracious acts, only such a man could have harmonized and guided to the conclusion which he pointed out an assembly so variously composed. And, considering the state of theological opinion seventy years before, not less marvellous was the concurrence of all but a few out of so many hundred Bishops in the theological judgment, so long desired at Rome; the protest made by some eighty or ninety, at the termination of the Council, against the proceedings of the vast majority lying, not against the truth of the doctrine then defined, but against the fact of its definition. Nor less to be noted is the neglect of the Catholic powers to send representatives to the Council, who might have laid before the Fathers its political bearings. For myself, I did not call it inopportune, for times and seasons are known to God alone, and persecution may be as opportune, though not so pleasant as peace; nor in accepting as a dogma what I had ever held as a truth, could I be doing violence to any theological view or conclusion of my own; nor has the acceptance of it any logical or practical effect whatever, as I considered, in weakening my allegiance to Queen Victoria; but there are few Catholics, I think, who will not deeply regret, though no one be in fault, that the English and Irish Prelacies of 1826 did not foresee the possibility of the Synodal determinations of 1870, nor can we wonder that Statesmen should feel themselves aggrieved, that stipulations, which they considered necessary for Catholic emancipation, should have been, as they may think, rudely cast to the winds.

And now I must pass from the mere accidents of the controversy to its essential points, and I cannot treat them to the satisfaction of Mr. Gladstone unless I go back a great way, and be allowed to speak of the ancient Catholic Church.

CHAPTER II.

THE BISHOP OF ROME IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

When Mr. Gladstone accuses us of "repudiating ancient history," he means the ancient history of the Church; also, I understand him to be viewing that history under a particular aspect. There are many aspects in which Christianity presents itself to us; for instance, the aspect of social usefulness, or of devotion, or again of theology; but, though he in one place glances at the last of these aspects, his own view of it is its relation towards the civil power. He writes "as one of the world at large"; as a "layman who has spent most and the best years of his life in the observation and practice of politics" (p. 7); and, as a statesman, he naturally looks at the Church on its political side. Accordingly, in his title-page, in which he professes to be expostulating with us for accepting the Vatican Decrees, he does so not for any reason whatever but because of their incompatibility with our civil allegiance. This is the key-note of his impeachment of us. As a public man he has only to do with the public action and effect of our Religion, its aspect upon national affairs, on our civil duties, on our foreign interests; and he tells us that our Religion has a bearing and behavior towards the State utterly unlike that of ancient Christianity, so unlike that we may be even said to repudiate what Christianity was in its first centuries, so unlike to what it was then that we have actually forfeited the proud boast of being "Ever one and the same"; unlike, I say, in this, that our action is so antagonistic to the State's action, and our claims so menacing to civil peace and prosperity.

Indeed! then I suppose that St. Ignatius of Antioch, and St. Polycarp of Smyrna, and St. Cyprian of Carthage, and St. Laurence of Rome, that St. Alexander and St. Paul of Constantinople, that St. Ambrose of Milan, that Popes Leo, John,

Sylverian, Gregory, and Martin, all members of the "undivided Church," cared supremely and labored successfully to cultivate peaceful relations with the government of Rome. They had no doctrines and precepts, no rules of life, no isolation and aggressiveness, which caused them to be considered, in spite of themselves, the enemies of the human race! May I not, without disrespect, submit to Mr. Gladstone that this is very paradoxical? Surely it is our fidelity to the history of our forefathers, and not its repudiation, which Mr. Gladstone dislikes in us. When, indeed, was it in ancient times that the State did not show jealousy of the Church? Was it when Decius and Dioclesian slaughtered their thousands who had abjured the religion of old Rome? or was it when Athanasius was banished to Treves? or when Basil, on the imperial prefect's crying out, "Never before did any man make so free with me," answered, "Perhaps you never before fell in with a Bishop"? or when Chrysostom was sent off to Cucusus, to be worried to death by an empress? Go through the long annals of Church History, century after century, and say, was there ever a time when her Bishops, and notably the Bishop of Rome, were slow to give their testimony in behalf of the moral and revealed law, and to suffer for their obedience to it? ever a time when they forgot that they had a message to deliver to the world—not the task merely of administering spiritual consolation, or of making the sick-bed easy, or of training up good members of society, or of "serving tables" (though all this was included in their range of duty)—but specially and directly, a definite message to high and low, from the world's Maker, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear? The history surely of the Church in all past times, ancient as well as mediæval, is the very embodiment of that tradition of Apostolical independence and freedom of speech which in the [illegible] of man is her great offence now.

Nay, that independence, I may say, is even one of her Notes or credentials; for where shall we find it except in the Catholic Church? "I spoke of Thy testimonies," says the Psalmist,

"even before kings, and I was not ashamed." This verse, I think Dr. Arnold used to say, rose up in judgment against the Anglican Church, in spite of its real excellences. As to the Oriental Churches, everyone knows in what bondage they lie, whether they are under the rule of the Czar or of the Sultan. Such is the actual fact that, whereas it is the very mission of Christianity to bear witness to the Creed and Ten Commandments in a world which is averse to them, Rome is now the one faithful representative, and thereby is heir and successor, of that free-spoken, dauntless Church of old, whose political and social traditions Mr. Gladstone says the said Rome has repudiated.

I have one thing more to say on the subject of the "semper eadem." In truth, this fidelity to the ancient Christian system, seen in modern Rome, was the luminous fact which more than any other turned men's minds at Oxford forty years ago to look towards her with reverence, interest, and love. It affected individual minds variously of course; some it even brought on eventually to conversion, others it only restrained from active opposition to her claims; but none of us could read the Fathers, and determine to be their disciples, without feeling that Rome, like a faithful steward, had kept in fulness and in vigor what our own communion had let drop. The Tracts for the Times were founded on a deadly antagonism to what in these last centuries has been called Erastianism or Cæsarism. Their writers considered the Church to be a divine creation, "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ," the Ark of Salvation, the Oracle of Truth, the Bride of Christ, with a message to all men everywhere, and a claim on their love and obedience; and, in relation to the civil power, the object of that promise of the Jewish prophets: "Behold, I will lift up My Hand to the Gentiles, and will set up My standard to the peoples: kings and their queens shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and they shall lick up the dust of thy feet." No Ultramontane (so called) could go beyond those writers in the account which they gave of her

from the Prophets, and that high notion is recorded beyond mistake in a thousand passages of their writings.

There is a fine passage of Mr. Keble's in the *British Critic*, in animadversion upon a contemporary reviewer. Mr. Hurrell Froude, speaking of the Church of England, had said that "she was 'united' to the State as Israel to Egypt." This shocked the reviewer in question, who exclaimed in consequence: "The Church is *not* united to the State as Israel to Egypt; it is united as a believing *wife* to a *husband* who threatened to apostatize; and, as a Christian wife so placed would act . . . clinging to the connection . . . so the Church must struggle even now, and save, not herself, but the State, from the crime of a *divorce*." On this Mr. Keble says: "We had thought that the Spouse of the Church was a very different Person from any or all States, and her relation to the State through him *very unlike that of hers, whose duties are summed up in 'love, service, cherishing, and obedience.'* And since the one is exclusively of this world, the other essentially of the eternal world, *such an Alliance* as the above sentence describes would have seemed to us, *not only fatal, but monstrous*!"* And he quotes the lines—

> "Mortua quinetiam jungebat corpora vivis,
> Componens manibusque manus, atque, oribus ora:
> Tormenti genus!"

It was this same conviction that the Church had rights which the State could not touch, and was prone to ignore, and which in consequence were the occasion of great troubles between the two, that led Mr. Froude at the beginning of the movement to translate the letters of St. Thomas Becket, and Mr. Bowden to write the Life of Hildebrand. As to myself, I will but refer, as to one out of many passages with the same drift, in the books and tracts which I published at that time, to my Whit-Monday and Whit-Tuesday Sermons.

*Review of Gladstone's "The State in its Relations with the Church," October, 1839.

I believe a large number of members of the Church of England at this time are faithful to the doctrine which was proclaimed within its pale in 1833, and following years; the main difference between them and Catholics being, not as to the existence of certain high prerogatives and spiritual powers in the Christian Church, but that the powers which we give to the Holy See, they lodge in her Bishops and Priests, whether as a body or individually. Of course, this is a very important difference, but it does not interfere with my argument here. It does seem to me preposterous to charge the Catholic Church of to-day with repudiating ancient history by certain political acts of hers, and thereby losing her identity, when it was her very likeness in political action to the Church of the first centuries that has in our time attracted even to her communion, and at least to her teaching, not a few educated men, who made those first centuries their special model.

But I have more to say on this subject, perhaps too much, when I go on, as I now do, to contemplate the Christian Church, when persecution was exchanged for establishment, and her enemies became her children. As she resisted and defied her persecutors, so she ruled her convert people. And surely this was but natural, and will startle those only to whom the subject is new. If the Church is independent of the State, so far as she is a messenger from God, therefore, should the State, with its high officials and its subject masses, come into her communion, it is plain that they must at once change hostility into submission. There was no middle term; either they must deny her claim to divinity or humble themselves before it—that is, as far as the domain of religion extends, and that domain is a wide one. They could not place God and man on one level. We see this principle carried out among themselves in all sects every day, though with greater or less exactness of application, according to the supernatural power which they ascribe to their ministers or clergy. It is a sentiment of nature, which anticipates the inspired command,

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls."

As regards the Roman emperors, immediately on their becoming Christians, their exaltation of the hierarchy was in proportion to its abject condition in the heathen period. Grateful converts felt that they could not do too much in its honor and service. Emperors bowed the head before the Bishops, kissed their hands and asked their blessing. When Constantine entered into the presence of the assembled Prelates at Nicæa his eyes fell, the color mounted up into his cheek, and his mien was that of a suppliant; he would not sit till the Bishops bade him, and he kissed the wounds of the Confessors. Thus he set the example for the successors of his power, nor did the Bishops decline such honors. Royal ladies served them at table; victorious generals did penance for sin and asked forgiveness. When they quarreled with them and would banish them, their hand trembled when they came to sign the order, and after various attempts they gave up their purpose. Soldiers raised to sovereignty asked their recognition and were refused it. Cities under imperial displeasure sought their intervention, and the master of thirty legions found himself powerless to withstand the feeble voice of some aged, travel-stained stranger.

Laws were passed in favor of the Church; Bishops could only be judged by Bishops, and the causes of their clergy were withdrawn from the secular courts. Their sentence was final, as if it were the emperor's own, and the governors of provinces were bound to put it in execution. Litigants everywhere were allowed the liberty of referring their causes to the tribunal of the Bishops, who, besides, became arbitrators on a large scale in private quarrels; and the public, even heathens, wished it so. St. Ambrose was sometimes so taken up with business of this sort, that he had time for nothing else. St. Austin and Theodoret both complain of the weight of such secular engagements as were forced upon them by the importunity of the people. Nor was this all: the emperors showed

their belief in the divinity of the Church and of its creed by acts of what we should now call persecution. Jews were forbidden to proselytize a Christian; Christians were forbidden to become pagans; pagan rites were abolished; the books of heretics and infidels were burned wholesale; their chapels were razed to the ground, and even their private meetings were made illegal.

These characteristics of the convert Empire were the immediate, some of them the logical, consequences of its new faith. Had not the emperors honored Christianity in its ministers and in its precepts, they would not properly have deserved the name of converts. Nor was it unreasonable in litigants voluntarily to frequent the episcopal tribunals, if they got justice done to them there better than in the civil courts. As to the prohibition of heretical meetings, I cannot get myself quite to believe that Pagans, Marcionites, and Manichees had much tenderness of conscience in their religious profession, or were wounded seriously by the imperial rescripts to their disadvantage. Many of these sects were of a most immoral character, whether in doctrine or practice; other were forms of witchcraft; often they were little better than paganism. The Novatians certainly stand on higher ground; but, on the whole, it would be most unjust to class such wild, impure, inhuman rites with even the most extravagant and grotesque of American sectaries now. They could entertain no bitter feeling that injustice was done them in their repression. They did not make free thought or private judgment their watch-words. The populations of the Empire did not rise in revolt when its religion was changed. There were two broad conditions which accompanied the grant of all this ecclesiastical power and privilege, and made the exercise of it possible; first, that the people consented to it; secondly, that the law of the Empire enacted and enforced it. Thus high and low opened the door to it. The Church of course would say that such prerogatives were justly hers, as being at least congruous grants made to her, on the part of the State, in

return for the benefits which she bestowed upon it. It was her right to demand them, and the State's duty to concede them. This seems to have been the basis of the new state of society. And in fact these prerogatives were in force and in exercise all through those troublous centuries which followed the break-up of the Imperial sway; and though the handling of them at length fell into the hands of one see exclusively (on which I shall remark presently), the See of Peter, yet the substance and character of these prerogatives, and the Church's claim to possess them, remained untouched. The change in the internal allocation of power did not affect the existence and the use of the power itself.

Ranke, speaking of this development of ecclesiastical supremacy upon the conversion of the Empire, remarks as follows:

"It appears to me that this was the result of an internal necessity. The rise of Christianity involved the liberation of religion from all political elements. From this followed the growth of a distinct ecclesiastical class with a peculiar constitution. In this separation of the Church from the State consists perhaps the greatest, the most pervading and influential, peculiarity of all Christian times. The spiritual and secular powers may come into near contact, may even stand in the closest community; but they can be thoroughly incorporated only at rare conjunctures and for a short period. Their mutual relations, their positions with regard to each other, form, from this time forward, one of the most important considerations in all history" (*The Popes*, vol. i. p. 10, *translation*).

CHAPTER III.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS HISTORICALLY PAPAL.

Now we come to the distinctive doctrine of the Catholic Religion, the doctrine which separates us from all other denominations of Christians, however near they may approach to us in other respects, the claims of the See of Rome, which have given occasion to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet and to the remarks which I am now making upon it. Of those rights, prerogatives, privileges, and duties, which I have been surveying in the ancient Church, the Pope is historically the heir. I shall dwell now upon this point, as far as it is to my purpose to do so, not treating it theologically (else I must define and prove from Scripture and the Fathers the "Primatus jure divino Romani Pontificis," which of course I firmly hold), but historically,* because Mr. Gladstone appeals to history. Instead of treating it theologically I wish to look with (as it were) secular, or even non-Catholic, eyes at the powers claimed during the last thousand years by the Pope—that is, only as they lie in the nature of the case, and on the surface of the facts which come before us in history.

1. I say the Pope is the heir of the Ecumenical Hierarchy of the fourth century, as being, what I may call, heir by default. No one else claims or exercises its rights or its duties. Is it possible to consider the Patriarch of Moscow or of Constantinople heir to the historical pretensions of St. Ambrose or St. Martin? Does any Anglican Bishop for the last three hundred years recall to our minds the image of St. Basil? Well, then, has all that ecclesiastical power, which makes such a show in the Christian Empire, simply vanished, or, if not, where is it to be found? I wish Protestants would throw themselves into our minds upon this point; I am not

* History never serves as the measure of dogmatic truth in its fulness.—*Vid. infr.* § 8.

holding an argument with them; I am only wishing them to understand where we stand and how we look at things. There is this great difference of belief between us and them: they do not believe that Christ set up a visible society, or rather kingdom, for the propagation and maintenance of His religion, for a necessary home and a refuge for His people; but we do. We know the kingdom is still on earth: where is it? If all that can be found of it is what can be discerned at Constantinople or Canterbury, I say it has disappeared; and either there was a radical corruption of Christianity from the first, or Christianity came to an end, in proportion as the type of the Nicene Church faded out of the world: for all that we know of Christianity, in ancient history, as a concrete fact, is the Church of Athanasius and his fellow-bishops: it is nothing else historically but that bundle of phenomena, that combination of claims, prerogatives, and corresponding acts, some of which I have recounted above. There is no help for it then; we cannot take as much as we please, and no more, of an institution which has a monadic existence. We must either give up the belief in the Church as a divine institution altogether, or we must recognize it at this day in that communion of which the Pope is the head. With him alone and round about him are found the claims, the prerogatives and duties which we identify with the kingdom set up by Christ. We must take things as they are; to believe in a Church is to believe in the Pope. And thus this belief in the Pope and his attributes, which seems so monstrous to Protestants, is bound up with our being Catholics at all; as our Catholicism is bound up with our Christianity. There is nothing then of wanton opposition to the powers that be, no dinning of novelties in their startled ears in what is often unjustly called Ultramontane doctrine; there is no pernicious servility to the Pope in our admission of his pretensions. I say, we cannot help ourselves—Parliament may deal as harshly with us as it will; we should not believe in the Church at all, unless we believe in its visible head.

So it is; the course of ages has fulfilled the prophecy and promise, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." That which in substance was possessed by the Nicene Hierarchy, that the Pope claims now. I do not wish to put difficulties in my way: but I cannot conceal or smooth over what I believe to be a simple truth, though the avowal of it will be very unwelcome to Protestants, and, as I fear, to some Catholics. However, I do not call upon another to believe all that I believe on the subject myself. I declare it, as my own judgment, that the prerogatives, such as, and in the way in which, I have described them in substance, which the Church had under the Roman power, those she claims now, and never, never will relinquish; claims them, not as having received them from a dead Empire, but partly by the direct endowment of her Divine Master, and partly as being a legitimate outcome of that endowment; claims them, but not except from Catholic populations, not as if accounting the more sublime of them to be of every-day use, but holding them as a protection or remedy in great emergencies or on supreme occasions, when nothing else will serve, as extraordinary and solemn acts of her religious sovereignty. And our Lord, seeing what would be brought about by human means, even had He not willed it, and recognizing, from the laws which He Himself had imposed upon human society, that no large community could be strong which had no head, spoke the word in the beginning, as He did to Judah, "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise," and then left it to the course of events to fulfil it.

2. Mr. Gladstone ought to have chosen another issue for attack upon us than the Pope's special power. His real difficulty lies deeper; as little permission as he allows to the Pope, would he allow to any ecclesiastic who would wield the weapons of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine. That concentration of the Church's powers which history brings before us

ought not to be the simple object of his indignation. It is not the existence of a Pope, but of a Church, which is his aversion. It is the powers themselves, and not their distribution and allocation in the ecclesiastical body, which he writes against. A triangle is the same in its substance and nature, whichever side is made its base. "The Pontiffs," says Mr. Bowden, who writes as an Anglican, "exalted to the kingly throne of St. Peter, did not so much claim new privileges for themselves, as deprive their episcopal brethren of privileges originally common to the hierarchy. Even the titles by which those autocratical prelates in the plenitude of their power delighted to style themselves, 'Summus Sacerdos,' 'Pontifex Maximus,' 'Vicarius Christi,' 'Papa' itself, had, nearer to the primitive times, been the honorable appellations of every bishop; as 'Sedes Apostolica,' had been the description of every bishop's throne. The ascription of these titles, therefore, to the Pope only gave to the terms new force, because that ascription became exclusive; because, that is, the bishops in general were stripped of honors to which their claims were as well founded as those of their Roman brother, who became, by the change, not so strictly universal as sole Bishop" (*Greg. VII.*, vol. i. p. 64).

Say that the Christian polity now remained as history represents it to us in the fourth century, or that it was, if that were possible, now to revert to such a state, would politicians have less trouble with eighteen hundred centres of power than they have with one? Instead of one, with traditionary rules, the trammels of treaties and engagements, public opinion to consult and manage, the responsibility of great interests, and the guarantee for his behavior in his temporal possessions, there would be a legion of ecclesiastics, each bishop with his following, each independent of the others, each with his own views, each with extraordinary powers, each with the risk of misusing them, all over Christendom. It would be the Anglican theory made real. It would be an ecclesiastical communism; and, if it did not benefit religion, at least it would not

benefit the civil power. Take a small illustration: what interruption at this time to Parliamentary proceedings does a small, zealous party occasion, which its enemies call a mere "handful of clergy"; and why? Because its members are responsible for what they do to God alone and to their conscience as His voice. Even suppose it was only here or there that episcopal autonomy was vigorous; yet consider what zeal is kindled by local interests and national spirit. One John of Tuam, with a Pope's full Apostolic powers, would be a greater trial to successive ministries than an Ecumenical Bishop at Rome. Parliament understands this well, for it exclaims against the sacerdotal principle. Here, for a second reason, if our divine Master has given those great powers to the Church, which ancient Christianity testifies, we see why His Providence has also brought it about that the exercise of them should be concentrated in one see.

But, anyhow, the progress of concentration was not the work of the Pope; it was brought about by the changes of time and the vicissitudes of nations. It was not his fault that the Vandals swept away the African sees, and the Saracens those of Syria and Asia Minor, or that Constantinople and its dependencies became the creatures of Imperialism, or that France, England, and Germany would obey none but the author of their own Christianity, or that clergy and people at a distance were obstinate in sheltering themselves under the majesty of Rome against their own fierce kings and nobles or imperious bishops, even to the imposing forgeries on the world and on the Pope in justification of their proceedings. All this will be fact, whether the Popes were ambitious or not; and still it will be fact that the issue of that great change was a great benefit to the whole of Europe. No one but a master, who was a thousand bishops in himself at once, could have tamed and controlled, as the Pope did, the great and little tyrants of the middle age.

3. This is generally confessed now, even by Protestant historians, viz., that the concentration of ecclesiastical power

in those centuries was simply necessary for the civilization of Europe. Of course it does not follow that the benefits rendered then to the European commonwealth by the political supremacy of the Pope, would, if he was still supreme, be rendered in time to come. I have no wish to make assumptions; yet conclusions short of this will be unfavorable to Mr. Gladstone's denunciation of him. We reap the fruit at this day of his services in the past. With the purpose of showing this I make a rather long extract from Dean Milman's *Latin Christianity;* he is speaking of the era of Gregory I., and he says, the Papacy "was the only power which lay not entirely and absolutely prostrate before the disasters of the times—a power which had an inherent strength, and might resume its majesty. It was this power which was most imperatively required to preserve all which was to survive out of the crumbling wreck of Roman civilization. To Western Christianity was absolutely necessary a centre, standing alone, strong in traditionary reverence, and in acknowledged claims to supremacy. Even the perfect organization of the Christian hierarchy might in all human probability have fallen to pieces in perpetual conflict: it might have degenerated into a half-secular feudal caste, with hereditary benefices more and more entirely subservient to the civil authority, a priesthood of each nation or each tribe, gradually sinking to the intellectual or religious level of the nation or tribe. On the rise of a power both controlling and conservative hung, humanly speaking, the life and death of Christianity—of Christianity as a permanent, aggressive, expansive, and, to a certain extent, uniform system. There must be a counterbalance to barbaric force, to the unavoidable anarchy of Teutonism, with its tribal, or at the utmost national independence, forming a host of small, conflicting, antagonistic kingdoms. All Europe would have been what England was under the Octarchy, what Germany was when her emperors were weak, and even her emperors she owed to Rome, to the Church, to Christianity. Providence might have otherwise ordained; but it is impossible for man to imagine

by what other organizing or consolidating force the commonwealth of the Western nations could have grown up to a discordant, indeed, and conflicting league, but still a league, with that unity and conformity of manners, usages, laws, religion, which have made their rivalries, oppugnancies, and even their long ceaseless wars, on the whole to issue in the noblest, highest, most intellectual form of civilization known to man. . . . It is impossible to conceive what had been the confusion, the lawlessness, the chaotic state of the middle ages, without the mediæval Papacy; and of the mediæval Papacy the real father is Gregory the Great. In all his predecessors there was much of the uncertainty and indefiniteness of a new dominion. . . . Gregory is the Roman altogether merged in the Christian Bishop. It is a Christian dominion of which he lays the foundations in the Eternal City, not the old Rome, associating Christian influence to her ancient title of sovereignty" (vol. i. pp. 401, 402).

4. From Gregory I. to Innocent III. is six hundred years; a very fair portion of the world's history, to have passed in doing good of primary importance to a whole continent, and that the continent of Europe; good, by which all nations and their governors, all statesmen and legislatures, are the gainers. And, again, should it not occur to Mr. Gladstone that these services were rendered to mankind by means of those very instruments of power on which he thinks it proper to pour contempt as "rusty tools"? The right to warn and punish powerful men, to excommunicate kings, to preach aloud truth and justice to the inhabitants of the earth, to denounce immoral doctrines, to strike at rebellion in the garb of heresy, were the very weapons by which Europe was brought into a civilized condition: yet he calls them "rusty tools" which need "refurbishing." Does he wish then that such high expressions of ecclesiastical displeasure, such sharp penalties, should be of daily use? If they are rusty, because they have been long without using, then have they ever been rusty. Is a Council a rusty tool, because none had been held, till 1870,

since the sixteenth century? or because there have been but nineteen in 1900 years? How many times is it in the history of Christianity that the Pope has solemnly drawn and exercised his sword upon a king or an emperor? If an extraordinary weapon must be a rusty tool, I suppose Gregory VII.'s sword was not keen enough for the German Henry; and the seventh Pius too used a rusty tool in his excommunication of Napoleon. How could Mr. Gladstone ever "fondly think that Rome had disused" her weapons, and that they had hung up as antiquities and curiosities in her celestial armory, or, in his own words, as "hideous mummies" (p. 46)—when the passage of arms between the great Conqueror and the aged Pope was so close upon his memory! Would he like to see a mummy come to life again? That unexpected miracle actually took place in the first years of this century. Gregory was considered to have done an astounding deed in the middle ages when he brought Henry, the German Emperor, to do penance and shiver in the snow at Canossa; but Napoleon had his snow-penance too, and that with an actual interposition of Providence in the infliction of it. I describe it in the words of Alison:

"'What does the Pope mean,' said Napoleon to Eugene, in July, 1807, 'by the threat of excommunicating me? Does he think the world has gone back a thousand years? does he suppose the arms will fall from the hands of my soldiers?' Within two years after these remarkable words were written the Pope did excommunicate him, in return for the confiscation of his whole dominions, and in less than four years more the arms did fall from the hands of his soldiers; and the hosts, apparently invincible, which he had collected were dispersed and ruined by the blasts of winter. 'The weapons of the soldiers,' says Segur in describing the Russian retreat, 'appeared of an insupportable weight to their stiffened arms. During their frequent falls they fell from their hands, and destitute of the power of raising them from the ground, they were left in the snow. They did not throw them away:

famine and cold tore them from their grasp.' 'The soldiers could no longer hold their weapons,' says Salgues, 'they fell from the hands even of the bravest and most robust. The muskets dropped from the frozen arms of those who bore them'" (*Hist.*, ch. lx. 9th ed.).

Alison adds: "There is something in these marvellous coincidences beyond the operations of chance, and which even a Protestant historian feels himself bound to mark for the observation of future ages. The world had not gone back a thousand years, but that Being existed with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years." As He was with Gregory in 1077, so He was with Pius in 1812, and He will be with some future Pope again, when the necessity shall come.

5. In saying this, I am far from saying that Popes are never in the wrong, and are never to be resisted; or that their excommunications always avail. I am not bound to defend the policy or the acts of particular Popes, whether before or after the great revolt from their authority in the sixteenth century. There is no reason that I should contend, and I do not contend, for instance, that they at all times have understood our own people, our natural character and resources, and our position in Europe; or that they have never suffered from bad counsellors or misinformation. I say this the more freely because Urban VIII., about the year 1641 or 1642, seems to have blamed the policy of some Popes of the preceding century in their dealings with our country.*

But, whatever we are bound to allow to Mr. Gladstone on this head, that does not warrant the passionate invective

* "When he was urged to excommunicate the Kings of France and Sweden, he made answer, 'We may declare them excommunicate, as Pius V. declared Queen Elizabeth of England, and before him Clement VII., the King of England, Henry VIII., . . . but with what success? The whole world can tell. We yet bewail it with tears of blood. Wisdom does not teach us to imitate Pius V. or Clement VII., but Paul V., who, in the beginning, being many times urged by the Spaniards to excommunicate James, King of England, never would consent to it'" (State Paper office, *Italy*, 1641–1662). *Vide* Mr. Simpson's very able and careful life of Campion, 1867, p. 371.

against the Holy See and us individually, which he has carried on through sixty-four pages. What we have a manifest right to expect from him is lawyer-like exactness and logical consecutiveness in his impeachment of us. The heavier that is, the less does it need the exaggerations of a great orator. If the Pope's conduct towards us three centuries ago has righteously wiped out the memory of his earlier benefits, yet he should have a fair trial. The more intoxicating was his solitary greatness, when it was in the zenith, the greater consideration should be shown towards him in his present temporal humiliation, when concentration of ecclesiastical functions in one man does but make him, in the presence of the haters of Catholicism, what a Roman Emperor contemplated, when he wished all his subjects had but one neck that he might destroy them by one blow. Surely, in the trial of so august a criminal, one might have hoped, at least, to have found gravity and measure in language, and calmness in tone—not a pamphlet written as if on impulse, in defense of an incidental parenthesis in a previous publication, and then, after being multiplied in twenty-two thousand copies, appealing to the lower classes in the shape of a sixpenny tract, the lowness of the price indicating the width of the circulation. Surely Nana Sahib will have more justice done to him by the English people than has been shown to the Father of European civilization.

6. I have been referring to the desolate state in which the Holy See has been cast during the last years, such that the Pope, humanly speaking, is at the mercy of his enemies, and morally a prisoner in his palace. That state of secular feebleness cannot last forever; sooner or later there will be, in the divine mercy, a change for the better, and the Vicar of Christ will no longer be a mark for insult and indignity. But one thing, except by an almost miraculous interposition, cannot be; and that is, a return to the universal religious sentiment, the public opinion, of the mediæval time. The Pope himself calls those centuries "the ages of faith." Such

endemic faith may certainly be decreed for some future time; but, as far as we have the means of judging at present, centuries must run out first. Even in the fourth century the ecclesiastical privileges, claimed on the one hand, granted on the other, came into effect more or less under two conditions, that they were recognized by public law, and that they had the consent of the Christian populations. Is there any chance whatever, except by miracles which were not granted then, that the public law and the inhabitants of Europe will allow the Pope that exercise of his rights which they allowed him as a matter of course in the eleventh and twelfth centuries? If the whole world will at once answer No, it is surely inopportune to taunt us this day with the acts of mediæval Popes towards certain princes and nobles, when the sentiment of Europe was radically Papal. How does the past bear upon the present in this matter? Yet Mr. Gladstone is in earnest alarm, earnest with the earnestness which distinguishes him as a statesman, at the harm which society may receive from the Pope, at a time when the Pope can do nothing. He grants (p. 46) that "the fears are visionary . . . that either foreign foe or domestic treason can, at the bidding of the Court of Rome, disturb these peaceful shores"; he allows that "in the middle ages the Popes contended, not by direct action of fleets and armies," but mainly "by interdicts" (p. 35). Yet, because men then believed in interdicts, though now they don't, therefore the civil Power is to be roused against the Pope. But his *animus* is bad; his *animus!* what can *animus* do without matter to work upon? Mere *animus*, like big words, breaks no bones.

As if to answer Mr. Gladstone by anticipation, and to allay his fears, the Pope made a declaration three years ago on the subject, which, strange to say, Mr. Gladstone quotes without perceiving that it tells against the very argument which he brings it to corroborate; that is except as the Pope's *animus* goes. Doubtless he would wish to have the place in the political world which his predecessors had, because it was

given to him by Providence, and is conducive to the highest interests of mankind; but he distinctly tells us in the declaration in question that he has not got it, and cannot have it, till a time comes, which we can speculate about as well as he, and which we say cannot come at least for centuries. He speaks of what is his highest political power, that of interposing in the quarrel between a prince and his subjects, and of declaring, upon appeal made to him from them, that the prince had or had not forfeited their allegiance. This power, most rarely exercised, and on very extraordinary occasions, it is not necessary for any Catholic to acknowledge; and I suppose, comparatively speaking, few Catholics do acknowledge it; to be honest, I may say I do; that is, under the conditions which the Pope himself lays down in the declaration to which I have referred, his answer to the address of the Academia. He speaks of his right "to depose sovereigns, and release the people from the obligation of loyalty, a right which had undoubtedly sometimes been exercised in crucial circumstances," and he says: "This right (*diritto*) in those ages of faith (which discerned in the Pope, what he is, that is to say, the Supreme Judge of Christianity, and recognized the advantages of his tribunal in the great contests of peoples and sovereigns) was freely extended—(aided indeed as a matter of duty by the public law (*diritto*) and by the common consent of peoples)—to the most important (*i più gravi*) interest of states and their rulers" (*Guardian*, Nov. 11, 1874).

Now let us observe how the Pope restrains the exercise of this right. He calls it his right—that is, in the sense in which right in one party is correlative with duty in the other, so that, when the duty is not observed, the right cannot be brought into exercise; and this is precisely what he goes on to intimate; for he lays down the conditions of that exercise. First, it can only be exercised in rare and critical circumstances (*supreme circonstanze, i più gravi interessi*). Next he refers to his being the supreme judge of Christendom, and to his decision as coming from a tribunal; his prerogative

then is not a mere arbitrary power, but must be exercised by a process of law and a formal examination of the case, and in the presence and the hearing of the two parties interested in it. Also in this limitation is implied that the Pope's definite sentence involves an appeal to the supreme standard of right and wrong, the moral law, as its basis and rule, and must contain the definite reasons on which it decides in favor of the one party or the other. Thirdly, the exercise of this right is limited to the ages of faith; ages which, on the one hand, inscribed it among the provisions of the *jus publicum*, and, on the other, so fully recognized the benefits it conferred as to be able to enforce it by the common consent of the peoples. These last words should be dwelt on: it is no consent which is merely local, as of one country, of Ireland or of Belgium, if that were probable; but a united consent of various nations of Europe, for instance, as a commonwealth, of which the Pope was the head. Thirty years ago we heard much of the Pope being made the head of an Italian confederation: no word came from England against such an arrangement. It was possible because the members of it were all of one religion; and in like manner a European commonwealth would be reasonable, if Europe were of one religion. Lastly, the Pope declares with indignation that a Pope is not infallible in the exercise of this right; such a notion is an invention of the enemy; he calls it "malicious."

What is there in all this to arouse the patriotic anxieties of Mr. Gladstone?

CHAPTER IV.

DIVIDED ALLEGIANCE.

But one attribute the Church has, and the Pope as head of the Church, whether he be in high estate, as this world goes, or not, whether he has temporal possessions or not, whether he is in honor or dishonor, whether he is at home or driven about, whether those special claims of which I have spoken are allowed or not,—and that is Sovereignty. As God has sovereignty, though He may be disobeyed or disowned, so has His Vicar upon earth; and farther than this, since Catholic populations are found everywhere, he ever will be in fact lord of a vast empire; as large in numbers, as far spreading as the British; and all his acts are sure to be such as are in keeping with the position of one who is thus supremely exalted.

I beg not to be interrupted here, as many a reader will interrupt me in his thoughts, for I am using these words, not at random, but as the commencement of a long explanation, and, in a certain sense, limitation, of what I have hitherto been saying concerning the Church's and the Pope's power. To this task the remaining pages will be directed; and I trust that it will turn out, when I come to the end of them, that, by first stating fully what the Pope's claims are, I shall be able most clearly to show what he does not claim.

Now the main point of Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet is this: that, since the Pope claims infallibility in faith and morals, and since there are no "departments and functions of human life which do not and cannot fall within the domain of morals" (p. 36), and since he claims also "the domain of all that concerns the government and discipline of the Church," and moreover "claims the power of determining the limits of those domains," and "does not sever them, by any acknowledged or intelligible line, from the domains of civil duty and allegiance"

(p. 45), therefore Catholics are moral and mental slaves, and "every convert and member of the Pope's Church places his loyalty and civil duty at the mercy of another" (p. 45).

I admit Mr. Gladstone's premises, but I reject his conclusion; and now I am going to show why I reject it.

In doing this I shall, with him, put aside for the present and at first the Pope's prerogative of infallibility in general enunciations, whether of faith or morals, and confine myself to the consideration of his authority (in respect to which he is not infallible) in matters of conduct, and of our duty of obedience to him. "There is something wider still," he says (than the claim of infallibility), "and that is the claim to an Absolute and entire Obedience" (p. 37). "Little does it matter to me whether my Superior claims infallibility, so long as he is entitled to demand and exact conformity" (p. 39). He speaks of a third province being opened, "not indeed to the abstract assertion of Infallibility, but to the far more practical and decisive demand of Absolute Obedience" (p. 41), "the Absolute Obedience, at the peril of salvation, of every member of his communion" (p. 42).

Now, I proceed to examine this large, direct, religious sovereignty of the Pope, both in its relation to his subjects and to the Civil Power; but first, I beg to be allowed to say just one word on the principle of obedience itself, that is, by way of inquiring whether it is or is not now a religious duty.

Is there then such a duty at all as obedience to ecclesiastical authority now? or is it one of those obsolete ideas, which are swept away, as unsightly cobwebs, by the New Civilization? Scripture says: "Remember them which have the *rule* over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow." And "*Obey* them that have the *rule* over you, and *submit yourselves;* for they watch *for your souls* as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." The margin in the Protestant Version reads, "those who are your *guides*"; and

the word may also be translated "leaders." Well, as rulers, or guides and leaders, whichever word be right, they are to be *obeyed*. Now Mr. Gladstone dislikes our way of fulfilling this precept; whether as regards our choice of ruler and leader, or our "Absolute Obedience" to him; but he does not give us his own. Is there any liberalistic reading of the Scripture passage? Or are the words only for the benefit of the poor and the ignorant, not for the *Schola* (as it may be called) of political and periodical writers, not for individual members of Parliament, not for statesmen and cabinet ministers, and people of Progress? Which party then is the more "Scriptural," those who recognize and carry out in their conduct texts like these, or those who don't? May not we Catholics claim some mercy from Mr. Gladstone, though we be faulty in the object and the manner of our obedience, since in a lawless day an object and a manner of obedience we have? Can we be blamed, if, arguing from those texts which say that ecclesiastical authority comes from above, we obey it in that one form in which alone we find it on earth, in that one person who, of all the notabilities of this nineteenth century into which we have been born, alone claims it of us? The Pope has no rival in his claim upon us; nor is it our doing that his claim has been made and allowed for centuries upon centuries, and that it was he who made the Vatican decrees, and not they him. If we give him up, to whom shall we go? Can we dress up any civil functionary in the vestments of divine authority? Can I, for instance, follow the faith, can I put my soul into the hands of our gracious Sovereign? or of the Archbishop of Canterbury? or of the Bishop of Lincoln, albeit he is not broad and low, but high? Catholics have "done what they could"—all that any one could: and it should be Mr. Gladstone's business before telling us that we are slaves, because we obey the Pope, first of all to tear away those texts from the Bible.

With this preliminary remark, I proceed to consider whether the Pope's authority is either a slavery to his subjects,

or a menace to the Civil Power; and first, as to his power over his flock.

1. Mr. Gladstone says that "the Pontiff declares to belong to him the *supreme direction* of Catholics in respect to all duty" (p. 37). Supreme direction; true, but "supreme" is not "minute," nor does "direction" mean "supervision" or "management." Take the parallel of human law; the Law is *supreme*, and the Law *directs* our conduct under the manifold circumstances in which we have to act, and may and must be absolutely obeyed; but who therefore says that the Law has the "supreme direction" of us? The State, as well as the Church, has the power at its will of imposing laws upon us, laws bearing on our moral duties, our daily conduct, affecting our actions in various ways, and circumscribing our liberties; yet no one would say that the Law, after all, with all its power in the abstract and its executive vigor in fact, interferes either with our comfort or our conscience. There are numberless laws about property, landed and personal, titles, tenures, trusts, wills, covenants, contracts, partnerships, money transactions, life-insurances, taxes, trade, navigation, education, sanitary measures, trespasses, nuisances, all in addition to the criminal law. Law, to apply Mr. Gladstone's words, "is the shadow that cleaves to us, go where we will." Moreover, it varies year after year, and refuses to give any pledge of fixedness or finality. Nor can any one tell what restraint is to come next, perhaps painful personally to himself. Nor are its enactments easy of interpretation; for actual cases, with the opinions and speeches of counsel, and the decisions of judges, must prepare the raw material, as it proceeds from the Legislature, before it can be rightly understood; so that "the glorious uncertainty of the Law" has become a proverb. And, after all, no one is sure of escaping its penalties without the assistance of lawyers, and that in such private and personal matters that the lawyers are, as by an imperative duty, bound to a secrecy which even courts of justice respect. And then, besides the Statute Law, there is the common and traditional;

and below this, usage. Is not all this enough to try the temper of a free-born Englishman, and to make him cry out with Mr. Gladstone, "Three-fourths of my life are handed over to the law; I care not to ask if there be dregs or tatters of human life, such as can escape from the description and boundary of Parliamentary tyranny?" Yet, though we may dislike it, though we may at times suffer from it ever so much, who does not see that the thraldom and irksomeness is nothing compared with the great blessings which the Constitution and Legislature secure to us?

Such is the jurisdiction which the Law exercises over us. What rule does the Pope claim which can be compared to its strong and its long arm? What interference with our liberty of judging and acting in our daily work, in our course of life, comes to us from him? Really, at first sight I have not known where to look for instances of his actual interposition in our private affairs, for it is our routine of personal duties about which I am now speaking. Let us see how we stand in this matter.

We are guided in our ordinary duties by the books of moral theology, which are drawn up by theologians of authority and experience, as an instruction for our Confessors. These books are based on the three Christian foundations of Faith, Hope, and Charity, on the Ten Commandments, and on the six Precepts of the Church, which relate to the observance of Sunday, of fast days, of confession and communion, and, in one shape or other, to paying tithes. A great number of possible cases are noted under these heads, and in difficult questions a variety of opinions are given, with plain directions, when it is that private Catholics are at liberty to choose for themselves whatever answer they like best, and when they are bound to follow some one of them in particular. Reducible as these directions in detail are to the few and simple heads which I have mentioned, they are little more than reflections and memoranda of our moral sense, unlike the positive enactments of the Legislature; and, on the whole, present to us no difficulty

—though now and then some critical question may arise, and some answer may be given (just as by the private conscience itself) which it is difficult to us or painful to accept. And again, cases may occur now and then, when our private judgment differs from what is set down in theological works, but even then it does not follow at once that our private judgment must give way, for those books are no utterance of Papal authority.

And this is the point to which I am coming. So little does the Pope come into this whole system of moral theology by which (as by our conscience) our lives are regulated, that the weight of his hand upon us, as private men, is absolutely unappreciable. I have had a difficulty where to find a measure or gauge of his interposition. At length I have looked through Busenbaum's *Medulla*, to ascertain what light such a book would throw upon the question. It is a book of casuistry for the use of Confessors, running to 700 pages, and is a large repository of answers made by various theologians on points of conscience, and generally of duty. It was first published in 1645—my own edition is of 1844—and in this latter are marked those propositions, bearing on subjects treated in it, which have been condemned by Popes in the intermediate two hundred years. On turning over the pages I find they are in all between fifty and sixty. This list includes matters sacramental, ritual, ecclesiastical, monastic, and disciplinarian, as well as moral—relating to the duties of ecclesiastics and regulars, of parish priests, and of professional men, as well as of private Catholics. And these condemnations relate for the most part to mere occasional details of duty, and are in reprobation of the lax or wild notions of speculative casuists, so that they are rather restraints upon theologians than upon laymen. For instance, the following are some of the propositions condemned: "The ecclesiastic who on a certain day is hindered from saying Matins and Lauds, is not bound to say, if he can, the remaining hours"; "Where there is good cause, it is lawful to swear without the

purpose of swearing, whether the matter is of light or grave moment"; "Domestics may steal from their masters, in compensation for their service, which they think greater than their wages"; "It is lawful for a public man to kill an opponent, who tries to fasten a calumny upon him, if he cannot otherwise escape the ignominy." I have taken these instances at random. It must be granted, I think, that in the long course of two hundred years, the amount of the Pope's authoritative enunciations has not been such as to press heavily on the back of the private Catholic. He leaves us surely far more than that "one-fourth of the department of conduct" which Mr. Gladstone allows us. Indeed, if my account and specimens of his sway over us in morals be correct, I do not see what he takes away at all from our private consciences.

But here Mr. Gladstone will object, that the Pope does really exercise a claim over the whole domain of conduct, inasmuch as he refuses to draw any line across it in limitation of his interference, and *therefore* it is that we are his slaves: let us see if another illustration or parallel will not show this to be a *non sequitur*. Suppose a man, who is in the midst of various and important lines of business, has a medical adviser, in whom he has full confidence, as knowing well his constitution. This adviser keeps a careful and anxious eye upon him; and, as an honest man, says to him, "You must not go off on a journey to-day," or, "You must take some days' rest," or "You must attend to your diet." Now, this is not a fair parallel to the Pope's hold upon us; for the Pope does not speak to us personally, but to all, and, in speaking definitively on ethical subjects, what he propounds must relate to things good and bad in themselves, not to things accidental, changeable, and of mere expedience; so that the argument which I am drawing from the case of a medical adviser, is *à fortiori* in its character. However, I say that though a medical man exercises a "supreme direction" over those who put themselves under him, yet we do not therefore say, even of him, that he interferes with our daily conduct, and that we are his slaves. He

certainly does thwart many of our wishes and purposes; and in a true sense we are at his mercy: he may interfere any day, suddenly; he will not, he cannot, draw any intelligible line between the acts which he has a right to forbid us, and the acts which he has not. The same journey, the same press of business, the same indulgence at table, which he passes over one year, he sternly forbids the next. Therefore if Mr. Gladstone's argument is good, he has a finger in all the commercial transactions of the great trader or financier who has chosen him. But surely there is a simple fallacy here. Mr. Gladstone asks us whether our political and civil life is not at the Pope's mercy; every act, he says, of at least three-quarters of the day, is under his control. No, not *every*, but *any*, and this is all the difference—that is, we have no guarantee given us that there will never be a case when the Pope's general utterances may come to have a bearing upon some personal act of ours. In the same way we are all of us in this age under the control of public opinion and the public prints; nay much more intimately so. Journalism can be and is very personal; and, when it is in the right, more powerful just now than any Pope; yet we do not go into fits, as if we were slaves, because we are under a *surveillance* much more like tyranny than any sway so indirect, so practically limited, so gentle, as his is.

But it seems the cardinal point of our slavery lies, not simply in the domain of morals, but in the Pope's general authority over us in all things whatsoever. This count in his indictment Mr. Gladstone founds on a passage in the third chapter of the *Pastor æternus*, in which the Pope, speaking of the Pontifical jurisdiction, says: "Towards it (erga quam) pastors and people of whatsoever rite or dignity, each and all, are bound by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, not only in matters which pertain to faith and morals, but also in those which pertain to the *discipline* and the *regimen* of the Church spread throughout the world; so that, unity with the Roman Pontiff (both of communion and

of profession of the same faith) being preserved, the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme Shepherd. This is the doctrine of Catholic truth, from which no one can deviate without loss of faith and salvation."

On Mr. Gladstone's use of this passage I observe first, that he leaves out a portion of it which has much to do with the due understanding of it (ita ut custoditâ, etc.). Next, he speaks of "*absolute* obedience" so often, that any reader, who had not the passage before him, would think that the word "absolute" was the Pope's word, not his. Thirdly, three times, (at pp. 38, 41, and 42) does he make the Pope say that no one can *disobey* him without risking his salvation, whereas what the Pope does say is, that no one can *disbelieve* the *duty* of obedience and unity without such risk. And fourthly, in order to carry out this false sense, or rather to hinder its being evidently impossible, he mistranslates, p. 38, "doctrina" (Hæc est doctrina) by the word "rule."

But his chief attack is directed to the words "disciplina" and "regimen." "Thus," he says, "are swept into the Papal net whole multitudes of facts, whole systems of government, prevailing, though in different degrees, in every country of the world" (p. 41). That is, *disciplina* and *regimen* are words of such lax, vague, indeterminate meaning, that under them any matters can be slipped in, which may be required for the Pope's purpose in this or that country, such as, to take Mr. Gladstone's instances, blasphemy, poor-relief, incorporation, and mort-main; as if no definitions were contained in our theological and ecclesiastical works of words in such common use, and as if in consequence the Pope was at liberty to give them any sense of his own. As to discipline, Fr. Perrone says: "Discipline comprises the exterior worship of God, the liturgy, sacred rites, psalmody, the administration of the sacraments, the canonical form of sacred elections and the institution of ministers, vows, feast-days, and the like"; all of them (observe) matters internal to the Church, and without any relation to the Civil Power and civil affairs. Perrone

adds: "Ecclesiastical discipline is a practical and external rule, prescribed by the Church, in order to retain the faithful in their *faith*, and the more easily lead them on to *eternal happiness*" (*Præl. Theol.*, t. 2, p. 381, 2d ed., 1841). Thus discipline is in no sense a political instrument, except as the profession of our faith may accidentally become political. In the same sense Zallinger: "The Roman Pontiff has by divine right the power of passing universal laws pertaining to the *discipline* of the Church; for instance, to divine worship, sacred rites, the ordination and manner of life of the clergy, the order of the ecclesiastical regimen, and the right administration of the temporal possessions of the church" (*Jur. Eccles.*, lib. i. t. 2, § 121).

So too the word "regimen" has a definite meaning, relating to a matter strictly internal to the Church: it means government, or the mode or form of government, or the course of government; and as, in the intercourse of nation with nation, the nature of a nation's government, whether monarchical or republican, does not come into question, so the constitution of the Church simply belongs to its nature, not to its external action. Certainly there are aspects of the Church which involve relations toward secular powers and to nations, as, for instance, its missionary office; but regimen has relation to one of its internal characteristics, viz., its form of government, whether we call it a pure monarchy or, with others, a monarchy tempered by aristocracy. Thus Tournely says: "Three kinds of regimen or government are set down by philosophers, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy" (*Theol.*, t. 2, p. 100. Bellarmine says the same, *Rom. Pont.*, i. 2; and Perrone takes it for granted, *ibid.* pp. 70, 71).

Now, why does the Pope speak at this time of regimen and discipline? He tells us in that portion of the sentence which, thinking it of no account, Mr. Gladstone has omitted. The Pope tells us that all Catholics should recollect their duty of obedience to him, not only in faith and morals, but in such matters of regimen and discipline as belong to the universal

Church, "so that unity with the Roman Pontiff, both of communion and of profession of the same faith being preserved, the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme Shepherd." I consider this passage to be especially aimed at Nationalism. "Recollect," the Pope seems to say, "the Church is one, and that, not only in faith and morals, for schismatics may profess as much as this, but one, wherever it is, all over the world; and not only one, but one and the same, bound together by its one regimen and discipline and by the same regimen and discipline—the same rites, the same sacraments, the same usages, and the same one Pastor; and in these bad times it is necessary for all Catholics to recollect, that this doctrine of the Church's individuality, and, as it were, personality, is not a mere received opinion or understanding, which may be entertained or not, as we please, but is a fundamental, necessary truth." This being, speaking under correction, the drift of the passage, I observe that the words "spread throughout the world" or "universal" are so far from turning "discipline and regimen" into what Mr. Gladstone calls a "net," that they contract the range of both of them, not including, as he would have it, "marriage" here, "blasphemy" there, and "poor-relief" in a third country, but noting and specifying that one and the same structure of laws, rites, rules of government, independency, everywhere, of which the Pope himself is the centre and life. And surely this is what every one of us will say as well as the Pope, who is not an Erastian, and who believes that the Gospel is no mere philosophy thrown upon the world at large, no mere quality of mind and thought, no mere beautiful and deep sentiment or subjective opinion, but a substantive message from above, guarded and preserved in a visible polity.

2. And now I am naturally led on to speak of the Pope's supreme authority, such as I have described it, in its bearing toward the Civil Power all over the world—a power which as truly comes from God as his own does, though diverse, as the Church is invariable.

That collisions can take place between the Holy See and national governments, the history of fifteen hundred years sufficiently teaches us; also, that on both sides there may occur grievous mistakes. But my question all along lies, not with "quicquid delirant reges," but with what under the circumstance of such a collision, is the duty of those who are both children of the Pope and subjects of the Civil Power. As to the duty of the Civil Power, I have already intimated in my first section that it should treat the Holy See as an independent sovereign, and if this rule had been observed, the difficulty to Catholics in a country not Catholic would be most materially lightened. Great Britain recognizes and is recognized by the United States; the two powers have ministers at each other's court; here is one standing prevention of serious quarrels. Misunderstandings between the two co-ordinate powers may arise; but there follow explanations, removals of the causes of offence, acts of restitution. In actual collisions, there are conferences, compromises, arbitrations. Now the point to observe here is, that in such cases neither party gives up its abstract rights, but neither party practically insists on them. And each party thinks itself in the right in the particular case, protests against any other view, but still concedes. Neither party says: "I will not make it up with you, till you draw an intelligible line between your domain and mine." I suppose in the Geneva arbitration, though we gave way, we still thought that, in our conduct in the American civil war, we had acted within our rights. I say all this in answer to Mr. Gladstone's challenge to us to draw the line between the Pope's domain and the State's domain in civil or political questions. Many a private American, I suppose, lived in London and Liverpool, all through the correspondence between our Foreign Office and the government of the United States, and Mr. Gladstone never addressed any expostulation to them, or told them they had lost their moral freedom because they took part with their own government. The French, when their late war began, did sweep their German sojourners out

of France (the number, as I recollect, was very great), but they were not considered to have done themselves much credit by such an act. When we went to war with Russia, the English in St. Petersburg made an address, I think to the Emperor, asking for his protection, and he gave it; I don't suppose they pledged themselves to the Russian view of the war, nor would he have called them slaves instead of patriots, if they had refused to do so. Suppose England were to send her ironclads to support Italy against the Pope and his allies, English Catholics would be very indignant, they would take part with the Pope before the war began, they would use all constitutional means to hinder it; but who believes that, when they were once in the war, their action would be anything else than prayers and exertions for a termination of it? What reason is there for saying that they would commit themselves to any step of a treasonable nature, any more than loyal Germans, had they been allowed to remain in France? Yet, because those Germans would not relinquish their allegiance to their country, Mr. Gladstone, were he consistent, would at once send them adrift.

Of course it will be said that in these cases there is no double allegiance, and again that the German government did not call upon Germans in France, as the Pope might call upon English Catholics, nay command them, to take a side; but my argument at least shows this, that till there comes to us a special, direct command from the Pope to oppose our country, we need not be said to have "placed our loyalty and civil duty at the mercy of another" (p. 45). It is strange that a great statesman, versed in the new and true philosophy of compromise, instead of taking a practical view of the actual situation, should proceed against us, like a professor in the schools, with the "parade" of his "relentless" (and may I add "rusty"?) "logic" (p. 23).

I say, *till* the Pope told us to exert ourselves for his cause in a quarrel with this country, as in the time of the Armada, we need not attend to an abstract and hypothetical difficulty:

then and not till then. I add, as before, that, if the Holy See were frankly recognized by England, as other sovereignties are, direct quarrels between the two powers would in this age of the world be rare indeed; and still rarer, their becoming so energetic and urgent as to descend into the hearts of the community, and to disturb the consciences and the family unity of private Catholics.

But now, lastly, let us suppose one of these extraordinary cases of direct and open hostility between the two powers actually to occur; here first, we must bring before us the state of the case. Of course we must recollect, on the one hand, that Catholics are not only bound by allegiance to the British Crown, but have special privileges as citizens, can meet together, speak and pass resolutions, can vote for members of Parliament, and sit in Parliament, and can hold office, all which are denied to foreigners sojourning among us; while on the other hand there is the authority of the Pope, which, though not "absolute" even in religious matters, as Mr. Gladstone would have it to be, has a call, a supreme call on our obedience. Certainly in the event of such a collision of jurisdictions, there are cases in which we should obey the Pope and disobey the State. Suppose, for instance, an act was passed in Parliament bidding Catholics to attend Protestant service every week, and the Pope distinctly told us not to do so, for it was to violate our duty to our faith: I should obey the Pope and not the law. It will be said by Mr. Gladstone that such a case is impossible. I know it is; but why ask me for what I should do in extreme and utterly improbable cases such as this, if my answer cannot help bearing the character of an axiom? It is not my fault that I must deal in truisms. The circumferences of State jurisdiction and of Papal are for the most part quite apart from each other; there are just some few degrees out of the 360 in which they intersect, and Mr. Gladstone, instead of letting these cases of intersection alone, till they occur actually, asks me what I should do if I found myself placed in the space intersected. If I must answer then

I should say distinctly that did the State tell me in a question of worship to do what the Pope told me not to do, I should obey the Pope, and should think it no sin if I used all the power and the influence I possessed as a citizen to prevent such a bill passing the Legislature, and to effect its repeal if it did.

But now, on the other hand, could the case ever occur in which I should act with the Civil Power, and not with the Pope? Now, here again, when I begin to imagine instances, Catholics will cry out (as Mr. Gladstone, in the case I supposed, cried out in the interest of the other side), that instances never can occur. I know they cannot; I know the Pope never can do what I am going to suppose; but then, since it cannot possibly happen in fact, there is no harm in just saying what I should (hypothetically) do, if it did happen. I say then in certain (impossible) cases I should side, not with the Pope, but with the Civil Power. For instance, let us suppose members of Parliament, or of the Privy Council, took an oath that they would not acknowledge the right of succession of a Prince of Wales, if he became a Catholic: in that case I should not consider the Pope could release me from that oath, had I bound myself by it. Of course, I might exert myself to the utmost to get the act repealed which bound me; again, if I could not, I might retire from Parliament or office, and so rid myself of the engagement I had made: but I should be clear that, though the Pope bade all Catholics to stand firm in one phalanx for the Catholic Succession, still, while I remained in office, or in my place in Parliament, I could not do as he bade me.

Again, were I actually a soldier or a sailor in her Majesty's service, and sent to take part in a war which I could not in my conscience see to be unjust, and should the Pope suddenly bid all Catholic soldiers and sailors to retire from the service, here again, taking the advice of others, as best I could, I should not obey him.

What is the use of forming impossible cases? One can find plenty of them in books of casuistry, with the answers

attached in respect to them. In an actual case, a Catholic would, of course, not act simply on his own judgment; at the same time, there are supposable cases in which he would be obliged to go by it solely—viz., when his conscience could not be reconciled to any of the courses of action proposed to him by others.

In support of what I have been saying, I refer to one or two weighty authorities:

Cardinal Turrecremata says: "Although it clearly follows from the circumstance that the Pope can err at times, and command things which must not be done, that we are not to be simply obedient to him in all things, that does not show that he must not be obeyed by all when his commands are good. To know in what cases he is to be obeyed and in what not . . . it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, 'One ought to obey God rather than man': therefore were the Pope to command anything against Holy Scripture, or the articles of faith, or the truth of the Sacraments, or the commands of the natural or divine law, *he ought not to be obeyed*, but in such commands is to be passed over (despiciendus)." (*Summ. de Eccl.*, pp. 47, 48.)

Bellarmine, speaking of resisting the Pope, says: "In order to resist and defend oneself, no authority is required. . . . Therefore, as it is lawful to resist the Pope, if he assaulted a man's person, so it is lawful to resist him if he assaulted souls, or *troubled the state* (turbanti rempublicam), and much more if he strove to destroy the Church. It is lawful, I say, to resist him, by not doing what he commands, and hindering the execution of his will" (*De Rom. Pont.*, ii. 29).

Archbishop Kendrick says: "His power was given for edification, not for destruction. If he uses it from the love of domination (quod absit) *scarcely will he meet with obedient populations*" *Theolog. Moral.* (t. i. p. 158).

When then, Mr. Gladstone asks Catholics how they can obey the Queen and yet obey the Pope, since it may happen that the commands of the two authorities may clash, I answer,

that it is my *rule*, both to obey the one and to obey the other, but that there is no rule in this world without exceptions, and if either the Pope or the Queen demanded of me an "Absolute Obedience," he or she would be transgressing the laws of human society. I give an absolute obedience to neither. Further, if ever this double allegiance pulled me in contrary ways, which in this age of the world I think it never will, then I should decide according to the particular case, which is beyond all rule, and must be decided on its own merits. I should look to see what theologians could do for me, what the Bishops and clergy around me, what my confessor; what friends whom I revered: and if, after all, I could not take their view of the matter, then I must rule myself by my own judgment and my own conscience. But all this is hypothetical and unreal.

Here, of course, it will be objected to me, that I am, after all, having recourse to the Protestant doctrine of Private Judgment; not so; it is the Protestant doctrine that Private Judgment is our *ordinary* guide in religious matters, but I use it, in the case in question, in very extraordinary and rare, nay, impossible emergencies. Do not the highest Tories thus defend the substitution of William for James II.? It is a great mistake to suppose our state in the Catholic Church is so entirely subjected to rule and system, that we are never thrown upon what is called by divines, "the Providence of God." The teaching and assistance of the Church does not supply all conceivable needs, but those which are ordinary; thus, for instance, the Sacraments are necessary for dying in the grace of God and hope of heaven, yet, when they cannot be got, acts of faith, hope, and contrition, with the desire for those aids which the dying man has not, will convey in substance what those aids ordinarily convey. And so a Catechumen, not yet baptized, may be saved by his purpose and preparation to receive the rite. And so, again, though "Out of the Church there is no salvation," this does not hold in the case of good men who are in invincible ignorance.

Hard Questions to Answer.

A Catholic Layman to His Protestant friend.

Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Do you believe that He spoke the truth? Do you believe He meant what He said when He said to an Apostle, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church"? Did He not expressly indicate one Church, and only one? Where to-day is that one Church? Which of the numberless sects of Protestantism can claim the title? In what do Protestants agree? What is your belief? A Catholic knows the articles as well as the grounds of his faith. Can a Protestant say the same? Catholics are quite contented with their religion and do not seek arguments to satisfy doubts. Why, on the other hand, are Protestants continually disputing about religion? Is not the reason in this, that they are uneasy, unsatisfied in their longings after truth? Christ promised, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," and while Catholics, depending entirely and without any fear upon the word of Christ, are free from anxiety in matters of religion, Protestants, who take only what portion of His word pleases themselves, are always restless.

If you say the Catholic Church to-day is not the same as the early Christian Church, then what Church is? Some Church must be, because Christ promised His Church should always endure; that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and that He will be "with it all days, even to the consummation of the world." All the others outside the Catholic Church that claim to be the Church of Christ did not come into existence until 1,500 years or more after His death. The Catholic Church has all the links of an unbroken chain up to the Apostles themselves. If the Catholic Church failed in her mission or lost her position as the Church of Christ, what Church for 1,500 years took her place? What became of the promises of Christ? What means of salvation were placed before the people for 1,500 years, and how?

Where do you get the Bible? Is it not from the Catholic

Church that preserved it through all the centuries and through all the raids and destruction of barbarism and through what you call the "Dark Ages"? How do you know anything of the Bible during the 1,500 years before Luther, except through the Catholic Church? If every one must read the Bible to know religion and be saved, what of those who cannot read in all parts of the world? What of those who could not afford to own a Bible in the days antecedent to printing, when a house was cheaper than a book? Where in the Bible do you read that reading the Bible is the way to heaven? Where do you read that your own private interpretation is the rule of faith? Do you not rather read that there are many things hard to understand which the unwary turn to their own destruction? Where in the Bible do you read that the first day of the week (Sunday) shall be the day of rest instead of the seventh (Saturday), which the Bible explicitly appointed for the Sabbath? And if you observe Sunday, is it not wholly on the practice and authority of the Catholic Church that brought about and decreed this observance?

And what do you know about the Catholic Church? Did you ever try to learn just what she believes and teaches? Would you feel justified to attack any other society or organization, any individual or body of men, any State or nation, with so little knowledge, with scarcely any fund of information but prejudice?

Was it worth while for Christ to have come on earth, to have preached His doctrines, to have spent His time and labor in instructing and forming His Apostles, to have given them a commission to preach (not to write, you notice) if one religion is as good as another? Does it not belong to Jesus Christ, as God, to decide what we must believe as well as do to save our souls? And since He said that those who believe the Apostles shall be saved, but those who believe not shall be condemned, is it not wisdom and duty to believe the Church which alone has any union with the Apostles, which alone has their doctrine and teaches in the name and with the authority not of mere human reason, which is capable of all errors, but of the Master of the Apostles and of us all, the Lord Jesus Christ?

Leo XIII.'s Message to the Twentieth Century:

The greatest misfortune is never to have known Jesus Christ. Christ is the fountain-head of all good. Mankind can no more be saved without his power than it can be redeemed without his mercy.

When Jesus Christ is absent human reason fails, being bereft of its chief protection and light; and the very end is lost sight of for which, under God's providence, human society has been built up.

To reject Dogma is simply to deny Christianity. It is evident that they whose intellects reject the yoke of Christ are obstinately striving against God. Having shaken off God's authority, they are by no means freer, for they will fall beneath some human sway.

God alone is life. All other beings partake of life, but are not life. Christ, from all eternity and by his very nature, is "the Life," just as He is "the Truth," because He is God of God. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. (John xv, 6.)

Once remove all impediments and allow the spirit of Christ to revive and grow in a nation, and that nation shall be healed.

The world has heard enough of the so-called "rights of man." Let it hear something of the rights of God.

The common welfare urgently demands a return to Him from whom we should never have gone astray; to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life,—and this on the part not only of individuals but of society as a whole.

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